

Measles FAQ from a Mom and Pediatrician

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As a pediatrician and a mom, I am hearing a lot of questions from parents here in San Antonio and Bexar County about measles. Here are some of the most common questions and answers as of February 27, 2025:



I heard there was an exposure in San Antonio. How worried should I be?

More than 95% of kindergarteners in our San Antonio public schools are vaccinated. This means that our city is doing a great job protecting kids and is a safe place for families to be. However, measles is very contagious, so we are likely to see cases of measles—even here.

At this point, I'm going about life as usual with my kids. I'm also paying attention to updates from [San Antonio Metro Health](#) and the [Texas Department of State Health Services](#). If we see more cases of measles here, families may need to take extra steps to protect babies, pregnant women, and people who are immunocompromised.

My baby is too young to be vaccinated for measles. How can I protect her?

Make sure others in the home are vaccinated. Do not travel to areas that are seeing many infections.

Can my baby get the vaccine early?

If you have a baby between 6 and 12 months old, they can safely get an MMR vaccine. Ask your doctor if this is a good option for your baby. Your doctor will probably recommend it if there are active measles cases in our area.

If your baby does get the vaccine early, she will still need two more doses to be fully covered.

Why don't we always give the vaccine at six months instead of 12 months?

When the risk of infection is very low, it's not worth getting an extra shot. Some babies do get an early vaccination, usually because they are going to travel internationally or because there is an outbreak going on locally. These babies still need a vaccine at 12 months and again before kindergarten.

My kid is up-to-date on vaccines. How do I know if they're covered for measles?

The MMR vaccine, which protects kids against measles, is given at the 12-month well-child-check. If your kid got their 12-month shots, he or she is protected. A second dose is given at 4-6 years of age (usually before kids start kindergarten).

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What about kids who have only gotten one shot? Are they safe?

Yes, they are safe. A single dose of MMR confers lifelong protection to about 93% of kids. The second dose increases that to 97%. So, most toddlers who have just gotten one shot are protected.

As of today, I am not planning to get an early vaccine for my kids. (My youngest son is a toddler now—he's only gotten one dose of MMR). However, it is safe to give the second dose of MMR early—as early as 28 days after the 12-month dose. Your doctor will probably recommend giving the second dose early if measles becomes very active in our area.

How long does it take for a baby to be protected after they get the vaccine?

It takes about two weeks.

What do I do if I find out that an unvaccinated person in my house (a baby, kid or adult) was exposed to measles?

Call your doctor right away. Depending on the person's age and the time of exposure, your doctor may recommend giving the MMR vaccine or a dose of antibodies to help protect them.

What do I do if I think my kid has measles?

Stay home and call your doctor. If your kid needs medical care, try to send a grown-up in first to let staff know that you are bringing a child with possible measles. (This will help prevent spread to kids in the waiting room.) In an emergency, call 9-1-1.

What does measles look like?

People with measles may get high fever, cough, runny nose and red eyes. A blotchy rash starts on the forehead and spreads down the body on day 3-5 of illness.

But lots of sick kids have cough, red eyes and runny nose!

Yes. In the first few days of illness, before the rash starts, it's hard to tell that it's measles unless you know your kid has been exposed.

My older kid is unvaccinated. If I go ask for a measles vaccine now, is my doctor going to be rude and judgmental?

I sure hope not! I know a lot of pediatricians in San Antonio, and all of them would be glad to help you take this step to protect your children now that measles risk is higher. As a pediatrician, my job is to partner with parents to help keep kids healthy and safe. It is safe for older kids to get the MMR even if they didn't get it in infancy.

Can adults get the measles vaccine?

Absolutely! If you were not immunized as a kid or aren't sure, talk to your doctor about getting protected now. It's a great step to protect yourself, your family and our whole community.

