

# Avon Lake City Schools

175 Avon Belden Road  
Avon Lake, Ohio 44012



## RUBELLA-GERMAN MEASLES INFORMATION

### **What is rubella?**

Rubella is a viral disease characterized by slight fever, rash and swollen glands. Most cases are mild.

### **Who gets rubella?**

In unvaccinated populations, rubella is primarily a childhood disease. Where children are well immunized, adolescent and adult infections become more evident. Rubella occurs more frequently in winter and spring.

### **How is rubella spread?**

Rubella is spread through the air or by direct contact with nasal or throat secretions of infected individuals.

### **What are the symptoms of rubella?**

Rubella is a mild illness which may present few or no symptoms. Symptoms may include a rash, slight fever, joint aches, headache, discomfort, runny nose and reddened eyes. The lymph nodes just behind the ears and at the back of the neck may swell, causing some soreness and/or pain. The rash, which may be itchy, first appears on the face and progresses from head to foot, lasting about three days. As many as half of all rubella cases occur without a rash. Arthritis or arthralgia (aching joints) may occur in up to 70% of adult women who contract rubella. Joint symptoms tend to occur around the time of the rash and may last for up to 1 month.

### **How soon do symptoms appear?**

The incubation period for rubella is 12-23 days; in most cases, symptoms appear within 14-17 days.

### **When and for how long is a person able to spread rubella?**

Rubella may be transmitted from seven days before to seven days after rash onset.

### **Does past infection with rubella make a person immune?**

Yes. Immunity acquired after contracting the disease is usually permanent.

### **What is the vaccine for rubella?**

Rubella vaccine is given on or after a child's first birthday, and is usually given as a combination measles, mumps, rubella (MMR) vaccination. Children should receive the first dose between 12 and 15 months of age and the second dose prior to school entry between 4 to 6 years of age.

### **What can be the effect of not being immunized against rubella?**

Rubella infection is dangerous because of its ability to damage an unborn baby. Infection of a pregnant woman may result in a miscarriage, stillbirth or the birth of an infant with abnormalities. The abnormalities of an infant born with Congenital Rubella Syndrome (CRS) may include deafness, cataracts, heart defects, liver and spleen damage and mental retardation. CRS occurs among at least 25 percent of infants born to women who had rubella during the first trimester of pregnancy.

**What can be done to prevent the spread of rubella?**

Here in the State of Ohio, it is required by law that students are updated on this immunization for school attendance. Maintaining high levels of rubella immunization in the community is critical to controlling the spread. Control of the spread of rubella is needed primarily to prevent the birth defects caused by CRS. Therefore, women of childbearing age should have their immunity determined and receive rubella vaccine if needed. Infected children should not attend school during their infectious period.

If you would like further information it can be found at the following websites or call your city Health Department. [www.cdc.gov/rubella](http://www.cdc.gov/rubella) or [www.odh.ohio.gov/pdf/idcm/rubella.pdf](http://www.odh.ohio.gov/pdf/idcm/rubella.pdf)

If you have any questions or would like to confirm your child's immunization status, please contact your physician or the nurse at your child's school.