

Public Health Advisory

Warning: increased risk of measles across Canada

May 1, 2025 Nunavut-wide

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The Department of Health is warning Nunavummiut of an increased risk of measles across Nunavut. Currently there are no confirmed cases of measles in Nunavut. There are, however, measles outbreaks in most southern Canadian provinces.

Measles is highly contagious and can easily spread from an infected person to others who are not vaccinated, or who have never had measles before. People infected with measles can spread it to others even before the rash appears.

The first symptoms of measles can include: fever, cough, a runny nose and red, watery eyes.

About 3 to 7 days after the first symptoms begin, a rash develops on the face and spreads to the rest of the body, including the arms and legs. The rash looks like red spots and blotchy patches that can last 4 to 7 days. In darker skin colours, the redness may be harder to see, or it may appear purple or darker than surrounding skin.

Protect yourself, your family and your community from measles by getting vaccinated.

- Measles can lead to severe complications, especially among children under five years of age, pregnant individuals, and those with a compromised immune system.
- The measles vaccine is safe and effective, providing almost 100 per cent protection after all recommended doses have been received.
- Vaccines save lives. Talk to your local healthcare provider to find out if you are up to date on vaccinations.
- Other ways to reduce the spread of measles: Stay home when sick and limit contact with others.
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or upper sleeve when coughing or sneezing.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water or use an alcohol-based hand rub.
- Do not share personal items such as bottles or food utensils.

If you develop symptoms of measles, isolate and call a health care provider immediately. The health care provider can arrange to see you while preventing the spread to others.

To learn more, please refer to the <u>measles factsheet</u> on the Government of Nunavut website.

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