



Measles Testing: A Quick Guide for Patients

You are being tested for measles because you have symptoms that may be caused by the measles virus.

What is measles?

- Measles is a very contagious respiratory virus that can spread easily through the air when someone with it breathes, coughs, sneezes or talks. The virus can stay in the air and on surfaces for up to two hours after an infected person has left the area.
- Measles usually starts with a fever, cough, runny nose, and red, watery eyes. About 3-7 days after these symptoms, a rash develops.
- Measles can be very serious with complications including deafness, blindness and infections of the brain and lungs.

What should I do while waiting for my test results?

- Stay home and away from other people. Do not have any visitors.
- Do not attend work, school, religious services and other public places.
- If you need to seek medical care, call the clinic or hospital ahead of time if possible and tell them you are waiting for measles test results. Wear a mask when you arrive.
- Do not take public transportation. If you do not have access to a private vehicle and must travel with someone else, wear a well-fitted medical mask, sit in the back seat with windows open.

If your test is positive...

- A public health nurse will contact you to provide further instructions.
- You may return to your regular activities after 4 full days have passed from the start of your rash (resuming regular activities on day 5).

If your test is negative...

- If you had a known exposure to measles, continue to monitor yourself for signs and symptoms of measles for 21 days from your last exposure. If you develop new symptoms, or your symptoms worsen, seek medical attention. If possible, call the clinic or hospital ahead of time to notify them of your symptoms and exposure to measles.
- If you had no known exposure to measles, you may resume your regular activities when you feel well enough to do so.

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