

Rubella & Women

RUBELLA (German Measles)

Rubella is usually a mild illness of young children spread by breathing, coughing and sneezing, but it is dangerous to the unborn child. Sometimes there are few symptoms.

Symptoms of rubella:

- rash
- swollen neck glands
- sore joints
- feeling unwell.

Effects of rubella on the unborn child can be:

- blindness
- deafness
- heart defects
- brain damage.

Get your immunity checked now

All women of childbearing age need to know if they are immune (protected) from rubella.



PROTECT UNBORN CHILDREN: ARE YOU IMMUNE TO RUBELLA?

You are likely to be immune if:

- you have already had rubella
- you have had rubella immunisation.

*Rubella can affect your unborn child causing serious defects.
Your rubella immunity can stop your baby being infected.*

IMPORTANT MESSAGES

If you are planning pregnancy, check in early with your midwife or doctor to see whether you need to be immunised from rubella.

When you get immunised, avoid getting pregnant for at least one month.

If you think you might be pregnant and your immunity was not tested, check early with your midwife or doctor.

The worst time for a pregnant woman to get rubella is during the first three months of pregnancy:

- If you think you are pregnant, try to keep away from children with a rash and adults who are unwell with flu-like symptoms unless you know you have immunity from rubella.
- If you have children, make sure they are immunised. The MMR (measles, mumps, rubella) vaccine is offered to all children at 15 months of age, and the second dose is at four years before starting school.
- If you are pregnant and in contact with people who have rubella, tell your doctor or midwife straight away. You will need to have tests to check whether you are immune or whether you have caught rubella.

Rubella can be difficult to diagnose and the immunisation is not 100% effective. Talk to your doctor, nurse or community health worker. Ask for a blood test to find out if you are immune.

Make sure your children are immunised

New Zealand Government

