

March 24, 2025

To students, parents and staff in elementary and secondary schools

Subject: Important! Measles vaccination

Dear Sir/Madam,

Cases of measles are being reported in different regions of Quebec at the moment. As measles is on the rise in several countries around the world, travellers may contract measles when they are abroad and be the source of outbreaks in Quebec when they return.

Measles is a highly contagious respiratory disease that can result in many complications and serious consequences. In Canada, one in 3000 people dies of measles.

There is no specific treatment for the disease, but it can be avoided by vaccination. **Vaccination is the best way to protect yourself.** Two (2) doses of vaccine are more than 95% effective.

What should you do?

Check your child's vaccination booklet to see if they received 2 doses of measles vaccine when they were 1 year old or older. Take the time to check if you and other members of your family are protected.

In Quebec, a person is protected if:		Examples of names of measles vaccines
Person born after 1980	They received 2 doses of vaccine (as of 12 months of age)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Priorix• Priorix-Tetra• MMR II• ProQuad• Attenuvax• Moru-Viraten• Rimevax• RRO• Trivirix• Measles vaccine
Person born between 1970 and 1979	They received 1 dose of vaccine (as of 12 months of age) If they are a health worker or trainee, traveller or military recruit, 2 doses are necessary.	
Person born before 1970	They are considered protected, even if they are not vaccinated and regardless of their country of birth	
At any age	They have had measles or have proof (medical certificate or blood test)	

It is strongly recommended that people who are not protected get vaccinated as soon as possible. **If a case of measles occurs in a school, all adults and children who are not protected will be excluded from school for a period of up to several weeks.**

The vaccine is free. You can make an appointment on [Clic Santé](#) or call 1-877-644-4545.

For more information about measles or the vaccine, go to the [Measles](#) page.

Thank you for your cooperation and vigilance.

Measles: Additional information

How does the virus spread?

Measles is extremely contagious. If an unprotected person has contact with the virus, there is a 9 out of 10 chance that they will get measles. The virus is caught by breathing the same air as an infected person, even at a distance of more than 2 metres (6 feet). The virus can survive suspended in the air for a few hours and can even disperse. The disease can also be spread by direct contact when a person touches an infected person or contaminated objects.

What are the possible complications?

Measles can cause persistent ear infections and diarrhea, especially in infants, but also rare and serious complications. Children who have measles are at risk of developing a lung infection (pneumonia), vision or hearing loss, a brain infection (around 1 in every 1000 to 2000 cases), and may even die from it. Around 1 in 10 people need to be treated in hospital.

Anyone who is infected can develop complications, but especially:

- babies under 1 year old;
- pregnant women (risk of miscarriage or preterm delivery);
- people with a weak immune system.

What are the symptoms of measles?

- Fever
- Cough
- Runny nose
- Conjunctivitis (red, watery eyes, sensitivity to light)
- Spots and/or rash on the skin (first on the face, then on the whole body)

A person with measles is contagious 4 days before and up to 4 days after the spots appear. The disease lasts 1 to 2 weeks.

What should you do if you have symptoms of measles?

If your child or a member of your family has symptoms of measles, stay home and call Info-Santé 811. If you have to go to a clinic or hospital, call before you go to let them know that you or your child might have measles. If you cannot do this, tell the person at reception as soon as you arrive. Wearing a mask is strongly recommended.