

Measles cases are on the rise across England. Vaccination is our best defence.

Measles is more than just a rash – it is a serious condition that spreads very easily and can lead to severe illness and even death. While most children have protection through the MMR vaccine, around one in ten in England do not, so are at risk of catching the disease. In some parts of the country, this is as high as four in ten children. In Newcastle by age 2, 92.7% of eligible children had received one dose of the MMR vaccine, and by age 5, 85.3% had received recommended two doses of MMR vaccine, meaning we have a significant proportion of children who are unvaccinated and who are at risk of contracting and spreading measles.

The MMR vaccine is recommended with the first dose at the age one year of age and a second dose at age three years four months. For maximum protection, you need both doses of the MMR vaccine. Getting the NHS MMR vaccine is free and usually takes just a few minutes. You can book an appointment and catch up on the MMR vaccine at any age. If you or your child have missed any MMR vaccinations or are unsure if your child is up to date, contact your GP practice to check. For children approaching their MMR vaccination age, your GP practice will be in touch to invite you to book an appointment when they are due. Parents and guardians can check their child's red book to see if they are up to date with their MMR vaccinations.

A resource for parents, schools, nurseries and other education settings is available here: [What to do if you think your child has measles and when to keep them off school - The Education Hub \(blog.gov.uk\)](#)