



Measles

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Why is in news? Mumbai measles outbreak due to low vaccination coverage

Measles is a **highly contagious viral disease** and is a cause of **death among young children** globally.

Rubella is a **contagious**, generally **mild viral infection** that occurs most often in **children and young adults**.

Though the diseases are caused by different viruses but share **more or less the same symptoms**, including the red rashes.

The **Measles & Rubella Initiative**, a global program, aims at eliminating both these diseases.

The **vaccine** for the disease are provided in the form of measles-rubella (MR), **measles-mumps-rubella (MMR)**, or **measles-mumps-rubella-varicella (MMRV)** combination.

Measles is **transmitted via droplets** from the nose, mouth or throat of infected persons.

Symptoms:

Initial symptoms, which usually appear 10–12 days after infection, include high fever, a runny nose, bloodshot eyes, and tiny white spots on the inside of the mouth. Several days later, a rash develops, starting on the face and upper neck and gradually spreading downwards.

The **most serious complications** include blindness, encephalitis (an infection that causes brain swelling), severe diarrhoea and related dehydration, and severe respiratory infections such as pneumonia.

Vulnerability:

Severe measles is **more likely among poorly nourished young children**, especially those with insufficient vitamin A, or whose immune systems have been weakened by HIV/AIDS or other diseases.

Prevention:

Routine measles **vaccination** for children, combined with mass immunization campaign in countries with low routine coverage, are key public health strategies to reduce global measles deaths.