

How to protect your child after they have been in contact with measles

What is immunoglobulin?

Immunoglobulins are naturally occurring blood proteins produced by the body and are an important part of the human immune system.

Why does my child need immunoglobulin?

Your child is at risk of becoming very unwell if they catch measles. This may be because they are very young, have a problem with their immune system, or they have not had measles immunisation before. This means they are not protected against becoming severely unwell if they catch measles.

Immunoglobulin contains antibodies made by people who have had measles infection or measles immunisation. It helps children who are not immune and catch the measles virus to fight it, so that either they don't get unwell at all, or they have a milder illness.

How is immunoglobulin made?

Immunoglobulin is made by taking it from donated blood from many thousands of donors and purifying it into a form which we can then inject.

Is immunoglobulin safe?

Immunoglobulin is made from blood. However, as well as being very careful that people who may carry infections passed in blood do not donate blood, the way that it is made has a number of steps to make sure any viruses or other causes of infection are killed in the process.

How will my child receive the immunoglobulin?

Your child will get immunoglobulin either via an injection into one or both thighs, or by a drip into a vein in their arm or hand.

Are there any side effects?

Most people do not have side effects, but allergic reactions can rarely occur. Symptoms of allergic reactions include rashes, a high temperature, shivering, itching, or wheezing. We will monitor your child while they are receiving the immunoglobulin, so that we can treat them immediately if they get any symptoms. Some children get a headache or tummy ache at the time or a day or so after they have immunoglobulin.



Will my child need any blood tests or other follow-up afterwards?

No. If your child develops signs of measles, keep them away from other people, and ask for an emergency review for your child with their GP.

Does my child still need their routine immunisations?

Yes. Immunoglobulin only gives short-term protection, whereas an immunisation teaches the immune system to remember an infection, so it protects long-term.



Can my child have their routine immunisations after receiving immunoglobulin?

Immunoglobulin may stop a person's own immune system from responding properly to immunisations for a short time. Therefore, you should delay any live immunisations including rotavirus, MMR, nasal flu vaccine, that your child is due, for 3 months. After this time your child should have all their routine immunisations. If you have questions about this, or about immunisations in general, then please speak with your Health Visitor or GP.

Do we need to do anything else?

No. We will send a letter to your child's GP to let them know. You do not need to tell anyone else.