



**Tamar Valley  
Health  
Patient's Group**

*tvhPPG*

<https://tamarvalleyhealth.org.uk>

## Measles and the MMR Vaccine

Measles cases on the rise in England and across Europe. Make sure you and your family are protected against becoming seriously unwell with measles by checking you are up to date with the MMR vaccine.

Just two doses of the MMR vaccine gives you and your family lifelong protection against catching measles. The first vaccine is given at age one year and the second at age 3 years and 4 months old. If you've missed any doses it's not too late to catch up. If you are unsure if you or your child are up to date check your child's red book or GP records and make an appointment to catch up any missed doses. For more information on the NHS vaccination schedule, please see the Tamar Valley health website - <https://tamarvalleyhealth.org.uk/digitalpractice/wellbeing-centre/child-health/>

**What is the MMR vaccine?** The MMR vaccine protects against measles, mumps and rubella which can be serious. MMR vaccination is offered to children at around 1 year of age, with a second dose at 3 years and 4 months. Both doses are required to offer full and lasting protection for your child against these vaccine preventable diseases. Your GP practice will invite you to arrange an appointment when your child is eligible for the vaccine. If your child is older and has missed the vaccine contact your GP practice to discuss and arrange an appointment to ensure they are fully protected. For more information about the any side effects contact the Practice.

**Are there any circumstances that my child shouldn't have their MMR?** Almost all children can be safely vaccinated with all vaccines. In general, a vaccine should not be given to children who have had a confirmed anaphylactic reaction to a previous dose of the same vaccine. While the MMR vaccine is safe for children with a severe egg allergy, you should let your doctor or nurse know if you or your child has had severe allergic reactions to gelatine, an antibiotic called neomycin, egg allergies. **What is the consent process for vaccination?** Parents, carers or those with parental responsibilities for young children should attend vaccination appointments with their child to give consent for them to receive vaccination. For looked after children, please refer to the care plan where permissions and restrictions of consent will be outlined.

**What is measles?** Measles is an infection that spreads very easily and can cause serious problems in some people. Having the MMR vaccine is the best way to prevent it. Measles usually starts with cold-like symptoms, followed by a rash a few days later. Some people may also get small spots in their mouth. First symptoms, before the rash appears include Cold-like symptoms, a high temperature, a runny or blocked nose, sneezing, a cough or red, sore, watery eyes **Can getting measles, mumps and rubella be serious?** Measles, mumps and rubella are highly infectious illnesses that can easily spread between unvaccinated people. These diseases can lead to serious problems such as meningitis and hearing loss. Most people are vaccinated against measles, mumps and rubella and since the vaccine was introduced in 1988, these conditions have become rare in the UK as the vaccine is good at providing protection.

**How can my child / how can I get measles?** Measles is a virus that spreads through the air and is passed on by coughs and sneezes. Those who have measles are infectious before they have any spots. The virus is highly infectious and one infected person with measles will infect 9 out of 10 unvaccinated people if they spend 15 minutes or more with them.

**Is measles just a childhood disease?** Measles is more common in young children, but anyone unvaccinated is at risk of getting measles and becoming seriously unwell. **Is measles not just a rash that goes away?** Measles can be serious and lead to long term health problems, such as blindness in rare cases. Most people who get measles feel very unwell for up to two weeks. There is no medical treatment for measles. One in five will need a hospital visit and one in 15 will have complications from getting measles.

**Sharon Trafford Tamar Valley Health Patient Participation Group Chair**