**Information letter for parents/caregivers of a child with measles**

Dear reader,

You are receiving this letter because your child has measles. This is unpleasant news and you may have questions about this. It is important to follow the rules of daily behaviour as explained in this letter. By doing so, you help prevent the virus from continuing to spread. If your symptoms get worse, call your GP.

**What is measles?**

Measles is an infectious rash disease caused by a virus. The disease starts with a fever, listlessness, cold symptoms and coughing. A skin rash of red spots emerges after 3 to 7 days. The rash starts behind the ears and then spreads all over the body. Children with measles may sometimes also get an ear infection or develop pneumonia.

**Contagiousness**

The virus is found in the nose and throat of a person with measles. When a person with measles coughs or sneezes, tiny droplets containing the virus are expelled into the air. If other people inhale the droplets, they could also get measles. The measles virus is very contagious. A person with measles can pass it on to others from 4 days before the rash first starts until 4 days after the red dots appear. The time between exposure and illness (the incubation period) is 7 to 14 days. It usually takes 10 days to start showing symptoms.

More information about measles: https://www.rivm.nl/en/measles.

**Staying home**

It is important that your child stays home up to and including 4 days after the red spots appear. During this period, it is best to avoid all contact with young babies, pregnant people, and/or people with severely impaired immunity. If the rash started more than 4 days ago, your child is no longer contagious. If your child feels better, then it is fine to return to childcare or school.

Do you have other unvaccinated children who normally go to childcare or school? Then keep these children at home, and check with the Municipal Public Health Service (GGD) about how long you need to keep them at home. By doing so, you prevent the virus from continuing to spread.

**Source and contact tracing**

The GGD will contact you to ask about which people your child has been in contact with. This could be household members, family members, or other children at childcare or school.

People who have not had measles yet, or have not been vaccinated against measles, can still get the virus. Babies younger than 14 months old, unvaccinated pregnant people, and people with severely impaired immunity have a higher risk of serious illness due to measles.

**Vaccination against measles (MMR)**

People who have been in contact with your child, and have not yet received a vaccination against measles (MMR), can get vaccinated by contacting the GGD. The vaccination helps them produce antibodies against the disease, so they will not get measles. People who have a higher risk of serious illness due to measles, but cannot be vaccinated, can receive treatment in the form of antibodies. These antibodies give them temporary protection against measles. The GGD will discuss this option with them.

**What should I do if I think that someone else in my family also has measles?**

If other family members show symptoms that could indicate measles, they should also stay home. It is also important that they stay away from young babies, pregnant people, and people with severely impaired immunity.

Call your GP before going to the doctor’s office. If the GP practice is busy, it would be easy to spread the virus to others. When you call, your GP or the doctor’s assistant will tell you what you can do.

**Do you have questions about measles?**

General information: https://www.rivm.nl/en/measles

Municipal Public Health Service (GGD) by phone:

Please feel free to contact the GGD if you have questions.

Kind regards,

**Infectious Disease Control Team**
GGD [….]