**Measles is a serious disease**

Measles is not a harmless childhood disease. It is a highly contagious viral disease that spreads easily among unvaccinated people. Symptoms usually appear 10 to 12 days after infection, initially resembling a cold, with a runny nose, cough and a slight fever. The eyes become red and sensitive to light. As the illness progresses, and usually on the third to seventh day, the temperature may reach 39 – 41 °C, and a red rash appears that lasts four to seven days.

Approximately 30 % of reported cases

have one or more complications, especially

among children under five years of age and adults over 20. Measles can be more severe in people with weakened immune systems.

**Complications from measles infection**

7 to 9 out of 100 children develop **ear infection**, which can result in hearing loss.

1 in every 1 000 patients develop acute encephalitis **(swelling of the brain)**. This can lead to convulsions and leave a child deaf or with mental

disability.

8 out of 100 patients report **diarrhoea**.

**Eye disorders**, such as destruction of the cornea (outer layer of eyeball) may lead to blindness. This condition affects,

in particular, malnourished children and is

linked to vitamin A deficiency.

1 to 6 out of every 100 patients suffer from **pneumonia**. This is the most common cause of death from

measles in young children.

A rare but **fatal brain complication** known as subacute sclerosing panencephalitis

(SSPE), can occur several years after measles.

1 out of 4 people who get measles will need

**hospitalization**.

Up to 1 in 1 000 measles patients **die** as a result

of the disease.

**Source: ECDC. Measles** [**and rubella elimination: Communicating the**](http://ecdcsp2010/en/publications/Publications/Measles-rubella-elimination-communicating-importance-vaccination.pdf) **importance of vaccination.** [**Stockholm: ECDC; 2014. Available at:**](http://ecdcsp2010/en/publications/Publications/Measles-rubella-elimination-communicating-importance-vaccination.pdf) **ecdc.europa.eu/en/publications/Publications/Measles-rubella- elimination-communicating-importance-vaccination.pdf**

[**www.ecdc.europa.eu**](http://ecdcsp2010/)

**Measles vaccination protects you and your family. By vaccinating against measles you contribute to a healthy community.**