

# MEASLES: THE FACTS



Llywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru  
Welsh Assembly Government

- 1** Measles is one of the most infectious diseases known.
- 2** It is spread through the air – on tiny droplets of moisture that are expelled when someone coughs or sneezes and these droplets are breathed in by someone else.
- 3** If your child is unprotected, the chances are he or she will catch measles if they come into contact with an infectious child.
- 4** Nearly everyone who catches measles will have a high fever, a rash and be unwell.
- 5** A child infected with measles virus will not usually show any symptoms for about the first 10 to 12 days – the incubation period. The first symptom is usually a fever that lasts between one and seven days.
- 6** The rash can appear as early as seven days after infection and up to 18 days after infection, but usually it appears around 14 days after. It lasts for five or six days and then fades.
- 7** An infected person remains contagious from the appearance of the first symptoms to about three or four days after the rash appears.
- 8** Children with measles have to spend about five days in bed and may be off school for ten days.
- 9** Adults are likely to suffer more complications and be ill for longer than children.
- 10** The complications of measles include chest infections, fits, swelling of the brain and brain damage.
- 11** Measles can kill.
- 12** Measles can be prevented by MMR vaccination, ideally at 12-13 months of age, with a second dose at about three years and four months.
- 13** Children who have had measles should still have MMR to protect them against mumps and rubella.
- 14** More than 500 million doses have been given in over 100 countries worldwide.
- 15** The MMR vaccine is as safe as any other vaccine and it's never too late to get your child vaccinated.