

# Measles Testing Guidance

## What does measles look like?

**Initial symptoms:** fever, cough, red/watery eyes, runny nose and Koplik spots. This is followed a few days later by a rash.



### Koplik spots:

White spots that appear on the inside of the mouth, often 1-2 days before onset of rash.



Measles causes a **rash** that starts on the head and spreads downward.

## Testing

The test will be conducted with a swab of the nose or throat and may also include a blood draw. The lab test(s) will be sent to the State Lab in Helena. Results may take up to three (3) days to be received by your provider.

## Waiting for Results

1. It's important to stay isolated while awaiting your measles test results. Staying isolated means staying home from work, school, and other activities—and away from others outside of your household. This helps protect your friends, family, and community from potential exposure to the virus that causes measles. Measles spreads very easily through the air when an infected person coughs, sneezes or breathes. It can also live on surfaces.
2. While in isolation, you should cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze and dispose of the tissue properly. Wash your hands frequently with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after coughing or sneezing.
3. You should remain isolated until you receive instructions from your doctor or the health department. If your measles test is positive, you will need to continue isolating until you are no longer infectious. This is usually four full days after the day the rash appeared. If your test results are negative, you will receive guidance from the health department.