

Rubella for Pregnant Women

What is Rubella?

Rubella or German Measles is an infectious viral disease of humans. Although in most people infection is mild, in early pregnancy it can cause serious birth defects or miscarriage.

What are the symptoms of Rubella?

The symptoms of Rubella include a mild fever, rash, runny nose, conjunctivitis and often swollen lymph nodes. Aching joints are also common in women.

How can I catch Rubella?

Rubella is spread from an infected person by droplets from the nose or mouth or direct contact, its is easily spread to people who have not been vaccinated or previously infected. The time from exposure to onset of illness is usually 14-21 days and people are usually infectious from 7 days before the rash appears.

Who is at risk?

Anyone who is not immunised is at risk. If you have no immunity, which will have been checked with a simple blood test either before or at the beginning of the pregnancy, you should avoid contact with any person who has Rubella especially up to 20 weeks pregnant.

Chances of developing abnormalities

8-10 weeks	90%
10-16 weeks	10-20%
16-20 weeks	very rare
20+ weeks	should have no affect

What are the effects?

Effects on the baby after 20 weeks are rare. Pregnant women who have come into contact with a case of Rubella should contact their doctor or midwife for further advice.

