

What is measles?

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In news— Mumbai has witnessed an outbreak of measles recently.

About measles-

- **Measles or as it is called 'khasra', is a highly contagious viral disease** which affects mostly children.
- It is one of the **leading causes of death and disability among young children.**
- There is **no specific treatment for measles but there is a vaccine to stay protected from the disease,** which is both safe as well as cost effective.
- Measles **spreads by coughing and sneezing, close personal contact or direct contact** with infected nasal or throat secretions.
- Death due to measles are caused by the complications associated with the disease like blindness, encephalitis, severe diarrhoea and pneumonia.
- The condition of an infected child turns severe in cases of poor nourishment, **Vitamin A deficiency** and if the child is immunocompromised.
- Symptoms appear around 10 to 14 days after exposure to the virus. **The main symptoms are fever,** dry cough, running nose, sore throat and rash.
- **The rashes look like small red spots which remain slightly raised** and give the skin a splotchy red appearance. The face of the rash breaks out first. Within days, it spreads to the rest of the body.
- **The WHO recommends immunization for all children with two doses of measles vaccine,** either alone, or in a measles-rubella (MR) or measles-mumps-rubella (MMR) combination.
- As per the guidance of National Health Mission, in India, measles vaccination is given under the Universal

Immunisation Programme at 9-12 months of age and the second dose at 16-24 months of age.