

Rubella

Agent: Rubella virus

Mode of Transmission: Person-to-person transmission through contact with nose and throat secretions from infected people. The virus may also be transmitted from mother to child during pregnancy, causing congenital rubella syndrome (CRS) in the infant.

Signs/Symptoms: Fever and rash, with frequent occurrences of joint pain, arthritis, and swelling of the lymph nodes.

Prevention: Vaccination, preferably administered as MMR vaccine, should begin at 12 months of age.

Other Important Information: In 2004, rubella was declared to no longer be endemic in the United States, although a small number of cases continue to be imported.

No cases of rubella were reported in Virginia during 2014. The most recent Virginia cases occurred in 2010 in two unvaccinated individuals. Prior to these cases, the last reported case occurred in 2001. While nine cases of rubella were reported in the United States in 2014, the five-year U.S. average for cases of rubella has declined to 6 cases per year.

Progress has been made in the Western hemisphere for rubella elimination, but it remains endemic for other parts of the world. An estimated 100,000 babies are born worldwide with CRS every year. While Virginia does not have a higher proportion of unvaccinated residents compared to other states, many international travelers visit Virginia each year. This underscores the importance of maintaining high vaccination rates and ensuring vaccination for those traveling abroad.