

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 in the infant.

Signs/Symptoms: Fever and rash, with frequent occurrences of arthralgia, arthritis, and lymphadenopathy.

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

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

No cases of rubella were reported in Virginia during 2012. The most recent cases in Virginia occurred in 2010 in two unvaccinated individuals. The cases occurred in an adolescent with travel to an out-of-state U.S. tourist destination and in a foreign-born adult with travel to a country where rubella is endemic. Prior to these cases, the last reported case occurred in 2001. Of note, nine cases of rubella were reported in the United States during 2012, which is similar to the previous five-year average of eight cases per year.

Although Virginia does not have a higher proportion of unvaccinated residents than most other states, each year Virginia hosts large numbers of visiting travelers and welcomes thousands of residents returning from trips abroad. This underscores the importance of vaccination in both travelers and non-travelers.