OBASI HOSANNA NNENNAYA, G.Demydenko

Rubella

Rubella, also called German measles or three-day measles, is a contagious viral infection best known by its distinctive red rash. The cause of rubella is a virus that's passed from person to person. It can spread when an infected person coughs or sneezes, or it can spread by direct contact with an infected person's respiratory secretions, such as mucus. It can also be transmitted from a pregnant woman to her unborn child via the bloodstream.

The signs and symptoms of rubella are often so mild they're difficult to notice, especially in children: Mild fever of 102 F (38.9 C) or lower; Headache; Stuffy or runny nose; Inflamed, red eyes; Enlarged, tender lymph nodes at the base of the skull, the back of the neck and behind the ears; A fine, pink rash that begins on the face and quickly spreads to the trunk and then the arms and legs, before disappearing in the same sequence.

Complications: could include: growth retardation, cataracts, and deafness. The highest risk to the fetus is during the first trimester, but exposure later in pregnancy also is dangerous.

Prevention: The rubella vaccine is usually given as a combined measles-mumps-rubella inoculation, which contains the safest and most effective form of each vaccine. Doctors recommend that children receive the MMR vaccine between 12 and 15 months of age, and again between 4 and 6 years of age — before entering school. It's particularly important that girls receive the vaccine to prevent rubella during future pregnancies