

Could you get pregnant?



Act now to protect against German measles

German measles (rubella) caught during pregnancy can very seriously damage your unborn baby.

You should make sure you are protected against rubella before you get pregnant.

immunisation

the safest way to protect the health of you and your baby

What is rubella?

Rubella is an infectious disease caused by a virus. It is spread through air-borne droplets when infected people cough or sneeze.

It causes a high temperature and a red-pink rash. In most cases, it is a mild infection but if caught during pregnancy it can have very serious consequences for the unborn child.

What damage can rubella cause?

Rubella caught in the first ten weeks of pregnancy causes damage to nine out of ten unborn babies. This damage includes:

- eye problems, such as cataracts (cloudy patches on the lens of the eye),
- deafness,
- heart abnormalities, and
- brain damage.

In some cases, it can lead to the loss of your baby or the possibility of termination.

How do I know if I'm already protected against rubella?

You need to be sure you had rubella or two MMR immunisations as a child or have a rubella blood test. We know that some young women who may now be starting to think about family planning missed out on their immunisations when they were children.

What should I do now?

Speak to your GP, health visitor or family planning advisor to check your immunisation history or arrange a rubella blood test.

For more information visit www.nhs.uk/vaccinations