

JUNE 2019

## Measles: More than just a little rash

**S**everal states in the US, including Tennessee, have reported cases of measles. Measles is a disease that spreads easily from person to person. Measles can be dangerous, especially for babies, young children and patients with weak immune systems. The immune system helps the body fight infection. Many St. Jude patients have weak immune systems because of their diseases and treatments. Measles is always dangerous for patients on chemotherapy.

### Measles symptoms

- High fever (may spike to more than 104° F)
- Cough
- Runny nose
- Red, watery eyes
- Rash breaks out 3–5 days after symptoms begin

### Measles can be serious

About one out of four people who get measles will need to be treated in a hospital.

One out of every 1,000 people with measles will develop brain swelling. It is caused by an infection that can lead to brain damage.

One or two people out of every 1,000 with measles will die, even with the best care.

### Measles spreads

Measles is spread from person to

person through the air by droplets that contain the virus. If you or your child has been near someone with measles, then you have been exposed to the virus. Measles can easily pass from the infected person to other people starting four days before you see the rash until four days after the rash appears.

### Have you been exposed?

If you or your child is ill or has been exposed to measles, you should call your primary clinic before coming to the hospital. This will help avoid putting other people at risk for getting measles.

If the exposed person has not had the vaccine, getting the MMR vaccine within 72 hours of being exposed might prevent the disease.

### Help protect your child

Because the measles-mumps-rubella (MMR) vaccine is made with a live virus, most St. Jude patients should not have the vaccine during treatment. When all family members get the MMR shot, it helps provide a circle of protection around the patient. It is one way to keep the virus from coming close to your child.

### Get free MMR shots

St. Jude is offering free MMR shots for caregivers and siblings Monday through Friday from 1–4 p.m. in the Patient Care Center Assessment and

Triage area.

If you have questions about measles or the vaccine, talk to your doctor or your child's primary clinic staff. You can also find more details about measles at [www.stjude.org/measles](http://www.stjude.org/measles).



## Celebrating the contributions of patient siblings

Child Life will host the 2019 Sibling Star Day event Monday, June 10. This year's theme is Amazing Race. The day will be filled with fun for patients' siblings ages 4–19.

Register between 10 and 10:30 a.m. at the Domino's Event Center located on the St. Jude campus. Siblings will take part in games and activities from 10:30 a.m.–11:30 a.m. and have lunch from 11:30 a.m.–noon.

Patients and families are asked to join the siblings for dessert in the Domino's Event Center at noon. After dessert, families will line the red carpet outside the Domino's Event Center as the siblings walk and receive their awards.

If you have questions about this event, talk to a child life specialist or call 901-595-3020.



## Please reserve your stay in advance

Housing and Patient Services needs your help to better serve you. Please be sure to reserve your room when you make your clinic appointments or travel plans. Here are tips to help:

- Before you return home, go to Housing and Patient Services to reserve your room for your next visit.
- You can also email them. If your request is more than five days away, please email [reservationrequest@stjude.org](mailto:reservationrequest@stjude.org). Patient Services staff will respond within 24 hours or the next business day.
- If your appointments are not set up when you leave St. Jude, email [reservationrequest@stjude.org](mailto:reservationrequest@stjude.org) as soon as you get your new schedule.
- If there is an emergency and you are coming to St. Jude the same day that the clinic calls you, call Housing and Patient Services as soon as you can. Remember: The clinic staff cannot reserve rooms for you.
- You can reserve your room Monday through Thursdays 7 a.m.–9 p.m., Fridays 7 a.m.–6 p.m., and Sundays 5–9 p.m. Call 866-278-5833 (toll-free) or 901-595-4501 (local).
- When you arrive on campus, check with Tri Delta Place staff for your room details.

Talk to Patient Services staff if you have questions.



## Talking about Medicines

### New yellow safety bags for handling hazardous medicines

By Tiffany Nason, PharmD, Outpatient Pharmacy

Does your child's medicine have a sticker that says hazardous? Some hazardous medicines are used to treat patients who have cancer, immune system problems and viral infections.

A hazardous chemical is one that can cause a physical or health hazard. These medicines can cause harmful changes in normal cells in the body. Caregivers should avoid contact with these drugs.

St. Jude wants to limit exposure to patients, caregivers and staff. You can help reduce the chance of harm to yourself, family, friends and the environment.

The Pharmacy places all chemo and hazardous medicine bottles in yellow bags that can be resealed. The staff wants to encourage safe handling. Please use this bag for storage at home and to transport the medicines. Be sure to return unused medicine as instructed by the Pharmacy and your clinic.

If you have questions about hazardous medicines, the yellow bags or any of your child's medicines, please talk to a St. Jude pharmacist or call 901-595-2114.

## St. Jude VBS 2019: Exploration Station

by Chaplain Kimberly Russell

For a fifth year, St. Jude Spiritual Care Services is offering a week-long Vacation Bible School (VBS) for patients and siblings at the hospital. This year's theme is Exploration Station.

Come join us in exploring the stories Jesus shares in the areas where they took place. We will explore the beach, the countryside, the mountains and the farmland. Our tour guide Navi Gator will lead the group through a story, song, crafts, games and snacks. Each day will be a new and exciting adventure.

Vacation Bible School is for children ages 5–13. Teen and young

adult patients and siblings can also volunteer as helpers. Wheelchairs, crutches and wagons are welcome. The crafts and activities will be adapted to fit our diverse group of kids. VBS is a church event many look forward to each summer, but it can be hard to fit in during treatment.

Learn more about St. Jude VBS Monday, June 24, from 1–3 p.m. at the ABC Wall. It is a chance to register, learn more and take part in one of the VBS crafts.

**VBS Dates:** Tuesday, June 25, through Friday, June 28

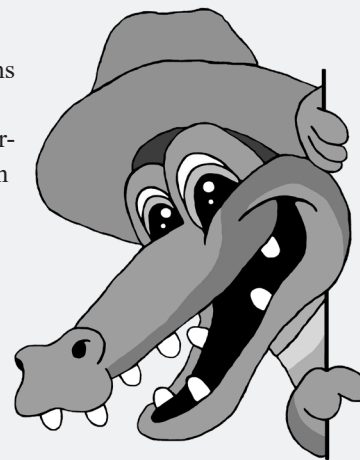
**Times:** 10–11 a.m.

**Where:** Kay Porch on the Patient Care Center second floor

Maps will be offered, and signs will be posted.

If you are interested in Vacation Bible School, ask a chaplain about pre-registering. They can put VBS into your child's daily schedule, which will help other staff know that your child is planning to attend VBS that day.

We look forward to celebrating a week of VBS with you.



*St. Jude Parents* is published on the first of each month by Patient Education and Biomedical Communications. Your questions and comments are important to us. **We want to print advice and tips from St. Jude parents to other St. Jude parents.** To share your ideas or to receive this newsletter by email, please call or email Samantha Ransone, RN, PhD, at 901-595-3334 ([ParentsNewsletter@stjude.org](mailto:ParentsNewsletter@stjude.org)) or Lois Young ([loislane.young@comcast.net](mailto:loislane.young@comcast.net)). To subscribe to an online version of this newsletter or to learn more about *St. Jude Parents*, visit [www.stjude.org/parents-newsletter](http://www.stjude.org/parents-newsletter). St. Jude is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

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ATTENTION: If you speak another language, assistance services, free of charge, are available to you. Call 1-866-278-5833 (TTY: 1-901-595-1040).

ATENCIÓN: si habla español, tiene a su disposición servicios gratuitos de asistencia lingüística. Llame al 1-866-278-5833 (TTY: 1-901-595-1040).

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