RUBELLA
( German Measles )

What is it?
Rubella is caused by a virus which causes a mild fever and a rash.

How do I know someone has it?
A child may have few symptoms but adults may have a fever, swollen neck glands, headache and possibly conjunctivitis for up to 5 days, followed by a fine rash. Female adults may also experience pain in the joints.

Is it infectious?
Yes, rubella is infectious from 1 week before until 4 days after the rash appears. It is spread by direct contact with sneezing or coughing (and urine in young babies).

What is the incubation period?
16 to 18 days.

Is there any treatment?
There is no specific treatment for rubella, but MMR vaccine is available to persons older than 13 months.

What should I do if someone has the illness?
- See a doctor but inform the surgery that you are bringing someone who may have rubella so that they can put you in a side waiting room. Rubella is notifiable.
- The infected person should avoid contact with any pregnant woman who has not been immunised against rubella. If a woman is unsure about her rubella status, she should seek advice from her GP.
- The infected person should rest while they have a fever.
- Keep the person cool by reducing the amount of clothing or bedding and by giving paracetamol as prescribed on the bottle.
- Ensure the infected person covers mouth when coughing and sneezing, and washes hands after blowing the nose nose.

How soon can someone return to school or work?
The person should stay away for 5 days from the onset of the rash.