

! Rubella, Congenital Syndrome

Merlin reporting code = 77100
Case report form (CRF): [Congenital Rubella Syndrome CRF](#)
PAPER CRF REQUIRED

Clinical description

An illness usually manifesting in infancy resulting from rubella infection in utero and characterized by signs or symptoms from the following categories:

- Cataracts/congenital glaucoma, congenital heart disease (most commonly patent ductus arteriosus, or peripheral pulmonary artery stenosis), loss of hearing, pigmentary retinopathy.
- Purpura, splenomegaly, jaundice, microcephaly, mental retardation, meningoencephalitis, radiolucent bone disease.

Clinical case definition

Presence of any defects or laboratory data consistent with congenital rubella infection.

Laboratory criteria for case classification

- Isolation of rubella virus,
OR
- Demonstration of rubella-specific IgM antibody,
OR
- Infant rubella antibody level that persists at a higher level and for a longer period than expected from passive transfer of maternal antibody (i.e., rubella titer that does not drop at the expected rate of a twofold dilution per month),
OR
- Detection of rubella virus-specific nucleic acid by polymerase chain reaction (PCR).

Case classification

Confirmed:

A clinically compatible illness in a person with laboratory evidence.

Probable:

- A person that has no laboratory evidence,
AND
 - Has any two complications listed in the 1st bullet of the clinical description
OR
 - Has one complication from the 1st bullet and one from the 2nd bullet of the clinical description,
AND
- Lacks evidence of any other etiology.

Suspect:

A person with some compatible clinical findings but not does not meet the criteria for a probable case.

Epidemiologic Classification of Internationally-Imported and U.S.-Acquired

Congenital Rubella Syndrome cases will be classified epidemiologically as internationally-imported or U.S.-acquired, according to the source of infection in the mother, using the definitions below, which parallel the classifications for rubella cases.

Internationally-imported case: To be classified as an internationally-imported CRS case, the mother must have acquired rubella infection outside the U.S. or in the absence of documented rubella infection, the mother was outside the U.S. during the period when she may have had exposure to rubella that affected her pregnancy (from 21 days before conception and through the first 24 weeks of pregnancy).

U.S.-acquired case: A U.S.-acquired case is one in which the mother acquired rubella from an exposure in the U.S.

U.S.-acquired cases are subclassified into four mutually exclusive groups:

Import-linked case: Any case in a chain of transmission that is epidemiologically linked to an internationally-imported case.

Import-virus case: A case for which an epidemiologic link to an internationally-imported case was not identified but for which viral genetic evidence indicates an imported rubella genotype, i.e., a genotype that is not occurring within the U.S. in a pattern indicative of endemic transmission. An endemic genotype is the genotype of any rubella virus that occurs in an endemic chain of transmission (i.e., lasting ≥ 12 months). Any genotype that is found repeatedly in U.S.-acquired cases should be thoroughly investigated as a potential endemic genotype, especially if the cases are closely related in time or location.

Endemic case: A case for which epidemiological or virological evidence indicates an endemic chain of transmission. Endemic transmission is defined as a chain of rubella virus transmission continuous for ≥ 12 months within the U.S.

Unknown source case: A case for which an epidemiological or virological link to importation or to endemic transmission within the U.S. cannot be established after a thorough investigation. These cases must be carefully assessed epidemiologically to assure that they do not represent a sustained U.S.-acquired chain of transmission or an endemic chain of transmission within the U.S.

Notes

Internationally imported, import-linked, and imported-virus cases are considered collectively to be import-associated cases.

1. A case that demonstrates laboratory evidence of infection, but without any clinical symptoms or signs is not reportable.
2. In probable cases, either or both of the eye-related findings (i.e., cataracts and congenital glaucoma) are interpreted as a single complication. In cases classified as infection only, if any compatible signs or symptoms (e.g., hearing loss) are identified later, the case is reclassified as confirmed.

 **Specimens from all cases must be sent to the Bureau of Public Health Laboratories for confirmation.**

Questions about rubella follow-up should be directed to the Department of Health Immunization Program at (850) 245-4342.

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