

NSW MEASLES ALERT

Information for NSW General Practitioners

Please distribute this information to all GPs and general practice nurses

Key points for GPs

1. **THINK MEASLES** in patients presenting with a febrile rash illness
2. **Isolate suspected cases**
3. **Call the public health unit and arrange urgent tests**

In the past four weeks NSW Health has been notified of 29 cases of measles in metropolitan and regional areas of NSW. Only seven of these cases were associated with travellers returning from overseas.

Who is at risk of measles?

- Children or adults born during or since 1966 unless they have received **two** doses of measles-mumps-rubella (MMR) vaccine or had confirmed measles in the past.
- Adults and children planning or returning from overseas travel who have not received two doses of MMR.
- People who report recent contact with measles and have not received two doses of MMR.

How does measles typically present?

- Initially presents with a prodrome of **fever, cough, coryza** and **conjunctivitis**
- Followed in 2-4 days by a maculopapular rash beginning on the face and neck, becoming generalised and lasting between 4 to 7 days. Koplik spots (small white lesions) are sometimes present on buccal mucosa.
- Measles is infectious from the day before the prodrome and up to 4 days after the appearance of rash.

How should GPs manage suspected measles cases?

- If a patient calls ahead with possible early measles, especially symptoms of fever and rash, ask your receptionist to isolate them from other patients in the waiting room or pathology collection centre.
- Notify your local public health unit by telephone during the consultation. Don't wait for test results.
- Your public health unit can assist you to arrange **URGENT** tests including measles serology, nose and throat specimen (viral transport swab) and a first pass urine sample (~50mL) for measles immunofluorescence and culture.
- If suspected cases are well enough to be cared for at home, they should remain isolated there until 4 days after the onset of the rash (when they are no longer infectious).

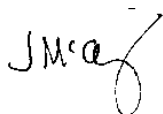
Check your patients immunisation history

- Routinely immunise children at 12 months and 4 years of age with MMR.
- Take every opportunity to ensure patients born during or since 1966 have received two doses of MMR.
- Opportunistic immunisation is especially important for people planning overseas travel.
- Health care workers may be exposed to measles cases in your clinic - ensure that you and your staff have received two doses of MMR.

For more information, please call your local public health unit

Camperdown	02 9515 9420	Penrith	02 4734 2022	Broken Hill	08 8080 1499	Newcastle	02 4924 6477
Gosford	02 4349 4845	Randwick	02 9382 8333	Dubbo	02 6841 5569	Port Macquarie	02 6588 2750
Hornsby	02 9477 9400	Albury	02 6080 8900	Goulburn	02 4824 1837	Tamworth	02 6764 8000
Parramatta	02 9840 3603	Bathurst	02 6339 5601	Lismore	02 6620 7500	Wollongong	02 4221 6700

A measles fact sheet is available at: <http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/factsheets/infectious/measles.html>



Dr Jeremy McAnulty
 Director, Centre for Health Protection
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NSW Department of Health
 ABN 92 697 899 630
 73 Miller St North Sydney NSW 2060
 Locked Mail Bag 961 North Sydney NSW 2059
 Tel (02) 9391 9000 Fax (02) 9391 9101
 Website www.health.nsw.gov.au