



Measles

What is measles?

Measles is a highly infectious viral disease that can be serious. It is spread from person to person through the air by breathing, sneezing or coughing. Just being in the same room as someone with measles can lead to infection if you are not immune.

Who is at risk of measles infection?

People are at risk of getting measles if they are not immune to measles. People who are regarded as not immune to measles are:

- People born after 1 January 1969 who have not had two doses of the measles-mumps-rubella (MMR) vaccine.
- Infants under the age of 15 months who have not received their first routine dose of MMR vaccine at 15 months old. They are susceptible and rely on everyone else to be immune so that measles does not spread to them.
- Children over four years who have not received their second dose of MMR.

What should you do?

- Ensure you are up to date with your immunisations.
- If you are not immune it is important to be aware of the symptoms of measles. **The early symptoms of measles** are fever, runny nose, sore red eyes and cough.
- **After 3 to 5 days** a red, blotchy rash appears on the face and head and then spreads down the body.

In the Bay of Plenty and Lakes DHB areas, priority groups for MMR vaccination are currently:

- Children at 15 months and four years
- Infants aged between 12 and 15 months who are travelling to areas where there are serious measles outbreaks, including Auckland.

If you develop symptoms of measles:

- Stay at home and away from public places (such as sports events, gatherings, parties, school, work, child care, shopping centres, public transport and so on).
- See your doctor as soon as possible so a diagnosis can be confirmed. However, phone the surgery ahead to alert them of your symptoms and to allow them to make arrangements to assess you safely and without infecting other people.
- If you are unable to visit your GP phone Healthline on 0800 611 116.

What happens if my doctor thinks I may have measles?

- You will be asked to have some tests for measles.
- Your doctor will advise you to stay in home isolation.
- Public health staff will be in touch to discuss contact tracing.

What happens if measles occurs in early childhood education services (ECE) and schools?

- Once a notification of measles is received by the local public health service, the ECE or school the child attends will be contacted immediately by public health staff who will provide information and advice to the manager or principal.

- A student or teacher with measles must stay away from school or ECE while they are infectious. Unimmunised children/students, or those with no immunity to measles, who have been close contacts of a measles case during the infectious stages will be excluded from school or ECE for 14 days from their last contact. This exclusion also applies to students taking part in sporting events.

What happens if measles occurs in my workplace?

Once measles has been confirmed, public health will contact the workplace with information and advice for staff.

For further information call on 0800 221 555 and ask to speak to the on call Health Protection Officer or email enquiries@toiteora.govt.nz.

Visit the Toi Te Ora Public Health website for updates: www.toiteora.govt.nz/measles