

## MEASLES FACT SHEET - 6 September 2019

With the large number of measles cases around the country, we can expect to see some measles cases on the Coast at some stage.

Measles is a highly infectious virus that can be life threatening. Complications occur in about one in three people, and for them measles can be serious, even fatal.

### What are the symptoms?

Measles symptoms are a:

1. cough or runny nose or conjunctivitis **AND**
2. fever above 38.5<sup>0</sup>c **AND**
3. a rash

If you're sick stay home and call your General Practice team/family doctor for advice any time of day or night. Please do not go to your GP in person as you may spread the illness to others. Anyone with measles needs to be isolated from the time they become ill until 4 days after the rash has appeared.

### Who is protected from measles?

People who have had two MMR vaccinations (typically given at 15 months and 4 years) are immune from measles. People born before 1969 will have been exposed to the measles virus and will have acquired immunity.

Those born between 1969 and 1990 are considered to have a good level of protection. This group were offered one measles vaccine and evidence suggests that one dose of MMR protects 95% of people from developing measles.

### Who is the priority group for vaccination?

In the Auckland region, particular effort is being made to vaccinate children, Pacific people, and those aged between 15 and 29 years to minimise the impact of this outbreak and the age at which the first dose of MMR is given has been moved from 15 months to 12 months.

In the rest of New Zealand, including the West Coast, there is no change at present to the National Immunisation Schedule, except for babies 12 months or older who are travelling to Auckland, who can bring their first MMR vaccination, usually given at 15 months, forward to 12 months. This may change as the national response to the Auckland outbreak evolves.

### What happens if there's been a case of measles in a school or workplace?

Health authorities will be in contact with any school or workplace where there has been a confirmed case and advise accordingly.

If there is a confirmed case and a risk of transmission, health authorities advise that those who are susceptible – including those who have never been vaccinated and those who have only had one vaccine – need to stay away until they are given the all clear.

As a general rule, a contact is someone who has been in the same room as a confirmed case or who has been in a room within one hour of a confirmed case being there.

More information about measles is available at <http://www.immune.org.nz>