

# MEASLES ALERT

Information for NSW General Practitioners  
Please distribute this information to all staff

H19/89593

1. Measles continues to be imported to NSW from many countries overseas
2. Ongoing outbreaks in New Zealand increase the risk of imported cases
3. Maintain a high index for measles in returning travellers with fever
4. Isolate suspected cases and call the public health unit if you suspect measles

## Measles in NSW

- In 2019 so far **39** cases of measles have been notified in NSW
- Most cases are in adults aged from 20 to 44 years of age with uncertain vaccination histories
- **Two cases reported this week were infectious in Sydney and Hornsby CBDs and the Blue Mountains**, including catching the train from Hazelbrook to Wynyard
- Secondary cases are likely to present in the coming weeks.

## How does measles present?

- Two to four days of prodromal illness with fever, cough, coryza, and conjunctivitis.
- A maculo-papular rash then typically begins on the face and neck and becomes generalised.
- Cases have occurred in people reporting prior vaccination – these tend to present atypically and may have a distorted temporal progression and/or clinical manifestation
- Measles cases are infectious from the day before the prodrome illness to 4 days after the onset of rash.

## How to manage suspected cases

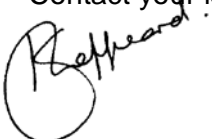
- **Isolate** - arrange to see suspected cases in their homes or at the end of the day.
- **Notify** - inform your public health unit (PHU) immediately – don't wait for test results before calling. The earlier a PHU knows about a suspected case the more effective containment interventions can be.
- **Test** - collect a nose and throat specimen, and a first pass urine sample for nucleic acid testing and blood for measles serology. Mark specimens as URGENT. Your PHU can assist in expediting testing, if indicated.
- **Continue** to display travel posters and measles posters and be on the look-out for new imports following holiday travel, and potentially locally acquired cases.  
<https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/Infectious/measles/Pages/default.aspx>

## Advocate for immunisation

- The best way for people to protect themselves and others is to get vaccinated
- Remember to vaccinate children at 12 and 18 months of age. Children aged between 6 and 18 months can have their schedule adjusted if travelling to high risk areas.
- Discuss vaccination with your patients – overseas travel is an opportunity to encourage vaccination for any patients with uncertain vaccination histories.
- Health care workers are at increased risk – ensure that you and your staff are vaccinated.
- Measles containing vaccines (MMR) are safe and available free in NSW for those born during or after 1966 who have not previously had two documented doses

## Further Information:

- Contact your local public health unit on 1300 066 055



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Health Protection NSW