

Measles

Information for staff and employees

Measles in Aotearoa New Zealand

Aotearoa is experiencing an ongoing serious measles outbreak. With cases identified in many communities around the country, you could be exposed at any time.

Measles is a serious and highly contagious illness, which can affect adults and children. It can make you and your family seriously unwell — especially children aged under 5 years old, and those who are pregnant or have a weakened immune system.

We encourage you to check if you are protected against measles. This is important because if you are not immune and you come into contact with someone with measles, you could become infected and you will also have to stay at home (quarantine) for at least 8 days.

The best way to protect yourself and make sure you can continue with work and your other normal activities is to be immunised.

Check you are protected against measles

Changes to the New Zealand Immunisation Schedule over time means you may not be fully immunised. This is particularly likely if you were born in Aotearoa between 1969 and 1990.

You are considered immune to measles if you:

- were born or lived in Aotearoa New Zealand before 1 January 1969
- have had 2 recorded doses of a measles vaccine after the age of 12 months old (with the second dose at least 4 weeks before being exposed to someone with measles)
- have evidence of having a measles infection previously.

Guidance on how to check your immunity is available at: info.health.nz/measlesimmunity

The following table can also help you work out if you might need a measles, mumps and rubella (MMR) vaccine.

When were you born?	Am I likely to be fully protected against measles?	Do I need an MMR vaccine?
Before 1 January 1969 in New Zealand	Yes. Before this time there were no measles vaccines, so most people were infected with measles during childhood.	No
1969 to 1992*	Probably not. You probably only had 1 measles vaccine, and it may have been given to you too young to give long term protection.	Yes. Unless you have records confirming you had 2 measles vaccines.
1992 to 2004**	Maybe not. You may have only had one measles vaccine because of changes to the timing of recommended MMR vaccination.	Yes, if you cannot confirm you had 2 measles vaccines
After 2004***	Yes if you had all your childhood vaccines.	No. Unless you do not have records confirming you had 2 measles vaccines.

* There was only one measles vaccine dose on the immunisation schedule at this time, and it may have been given to you before the age of 12 months.

** The timing of the second vaccine changed over this time and many people missed their second dose.

*** The schedule included 2 measles vaccines since this time, and where there were changes to timing, children were actively followed up to make sure they received their second MMR vaccine.

Keep a record of your immunity to measles

You may be fully immunised or have had measles, but if you don't have documented evidence of this you may be required by public health services to stay home if you are exposed to measles. Having evidence of your immunity ready to provide if asked helps public health services rapidly assess when you can return to work.

Keep a record of your evidence of immunity to measles which includes the dates of vaccines that were given. You can do this by taking a photo or scanning the record and emailing it to yourself or by printing a copy and keeping it in a safe place.

If you were immunised overseas, talk to your GP, or other healthcare provider about getting your immunisation records loaded to the Aotearoa Immunisation Register (AIR).

To find out how to get a copy of your immunisation records, visit info.health.nz/get-a-copy-of-your-immunisation-record

Get immunised if you are not immune or do not have recorded evidence of immunisation

If you are not immune, your best protection against measles is immunisation. Two doses of the MMR vaccine after the age of 12 months will fully protect about 99% of people from measles.

The MMR vaccine is free for:

- anyone aged 18 or over if they are eligible for free healthcare in Aotearoa
- anyone under 18 — it does not matter what their immigration status is
- Recognised Seasonal Employer workers and many people in Aotearoa on work visas.

For most people, it is safe to have extra MMR vaccines even if it is possible you are already immune. You should talk to your GP, hauora or healthcare provider if you:

- are pregnant
- have a condition or are taking medication that could suppress your immune system (such as some cancer treatments).

To get vaccinated contact your GP, doctor, Hauora or healthcare provider, or call the Vaccination Helpline free on 0800 28 29 26 (8.30am to 5.00pm Monday to Friday) this service has interpreters available and you can choose to speak with a Māori or Pacific advisor, a disability advisor, or use NZ Relay.

You can also book a vaccination appointment at info.health.nz/bookavaccine. Many pharmacies offer MMR vaccination. These providers can be found at healthpoint.co.nz/immunisation

For information about the MMR vaccine and how you can get immunised, visit info.health.nz/mmr

Check your family are immunised as well

If your family members are fully immunised against measles, it protects them from getting really sick. It also means if anyone in your family is exposed to measles, everyone can continue with their normal activities, such as work and school, and individuals won't need to stay home to quarantine.

If you are feeling unwell or have measles symptoms

If you are unwell or have any measles symptoms, stay home and seek healthcare advice from your GP, hauora, Pacific or other healthcare provider. You can also call Healthline anytime for free on **0800 611 116** for advice and support.

Further information

For further information about measles, visit info.health.nz/measles