

Kia ora koutou

**Please share this information with your networks, members, or providers.**

With the report of measles in Tāmaki Makaurau on May 3, please see attached the links to the various resources that have been developed to enable you to ensure our communities and whānau remain informed. Below are some patient focused FAQs you may want to share through your practice communications channels.

If measles is suspected:

- Please notify the Medical Officer of Health as soon as you suspect measles – do not wait for a laboratory confirmation.
- Arrange nasopharyngeal or oropharyngeal sampling, using viral swab, for measles PCR. Include clinical details and symptom onset. Contact local laboratory if further information on testing is required.
- Isolate patient immediately and maintain IPC measures.
- Check [Health Pathways](#) for further up-to-date measles assessment and management information.
- Please consider active recall to vaccinate enrolled patients and opportunistic MMR vaccination. Use [Priority Childhood Immunisation Matrix](#) to guide immunisation activity. Māori and Pacific infants are highest priority populations.
- The latest media release is available here: <https://www.tewhatauora.govt.nz/about-us/news-and-updates/new-measles-case-prompts-school-closure-for-contact-tracing/>
- Primary care is encouraged to find out if their staff are immune to measles. If there is measles exposure on-site, immunisation records may be requested.

## Resources

On the [Te Whatu Ora website](#), you will find:

- A [general information factsheet](#) about measles
- Poster to be put up in public places [asking for people to stay home if they have measles](#)
- Posters for venues [where an exposure event has taken place](#) to sign post potential contacts to further information
- Poster for venues where an exposure event has taken place, to provide [details of when exposure event took place](#) and what potential contacts should do next.

All posters are [available in 18 additional languages](#)

The National Immunisation Programme has a [Dropbox of resources](#) to help promote MMR vaccination. These are available for free download.

## **Public focused FAQs**

### ***Where can people get vaccinated?***

You can get your free Measles Mumps and Rubella (MMR) vaccine at your General Practice, hauora Māori or Pacific provider and at many pharmacies.

Some pharmacies are unable to provide vaccinations to people under the age of 3 years, if this is the case in your area you will need to go to your primary care health provider for the free vaccine. Call your local pharmacy to check if they provide MMR vaccines. Or, to find your local pharmacy that provides this service, visit [www.healthpoint.co.nz](http://www.healthpoint.co.nz) and type 'MMR vaccine' into the search box. Many pharmacies will allow walk-ins but it's a good idea to call ahead to check.

You'll need a total of 2 doses to be fully protected and they need to be at least a month apart.

### ***How infectious is measles?***

Measles is a very serious illness that can spread easily amongst those that are not immune. It is much more contagious than COVID-19, particularly amongst people who aren't immune.

The best protection against measles is to be vaccinated with two doses of the measles, mumps, rubella (MMR) vaccine. It is safe to have an extra MMR vaccination if you can't prove you have had two doses.

The MMR vaccine is free. If you or anyone in your whānau born on or after 1 January 1969 has not had an MMR vaccine, or aren't sure, ask your General Practice, hauora Māori or Pacific provider, parent or caregiver. If you can't confirm two doses were given, play it safe and get vaccinated. There are no safety concerns with having an extra dose.

### ***What are the symptoms of measles?***

Symptoms can include a fever, cough, runny nose and sore and watery 'pink' eyes. These are followed by a blotchy rash. If you catch measles, you are infectious from four days before and until four days after the rash appears.

### ***What should people do if they experience symptoms?***

If you have symptoms, you should call your General Practice, hauora Māori or Pacific provider or Healthline on 0800 611 116. If you need to visit your primary care health provider or an after-hours clinic, phone ahead first to limit the risk of the virus being spread to other people. Because measles is so infectious, it's important that those that have been diagnosed with measles isolate (i.e. staying at home unless seeking healthcare). People who have measles will need to isolate until four days after the rash first appears.

### ***What does this case mean for New Zealand?***

Public health teams are currently tracing contacts of the case to check immunity, manage them appropriately and offer vaccination where appropriate.

We are all aware of how infectious measles is from the last outbreak in Auckland and Northland in 2019. The most important thing that people can do to protect themselves is to ensure they are immunised, along with their tamariki. Vaccination is the best protection against measles.