

MEASLES ALERT

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

H20/1596-1

1. **Measles is a risk for both travellers and local residents.**
2. **Locally-acquired measles cases have recently been reported in Sydney.**
3. **Consider measles in returning travellers with fever, and in anyone with fever and a maculopapular rash.**
4. **Isolate suspected measles cases and call Public Health on 1300 066 055.**

Measles in NSW

- There have been **6** measles cases notified since New Year's Eve and all are likely to have acquired their infections in Sydney. None were known contacts of recent cases.
- Most cases have been in young adults aged 20-34 years; some had been vaccinated.
- Maintain a high index of suspicion for measles in returning travellers with fever, and in anyone with fever and maculopapular rash.

How does measles present?

- A 2-4 day prodromal illness with fever, cough, coryza, and conjunctivitis.
- A maculopapular rash then typically begins on the face and neck and becomes generalised.
- Measles in previously vaccinated people may present atypically, with milder symptoms and a slower progression to the rash.
- Cases are infectious from the day before the prodrome to four days after the rash onset.

How to manage suspected cases

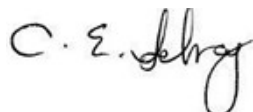
- **Isolate** – arrange to see suspected cases in their homes or at the end of the day.
- **Notify** – inform your public health unit (PHU) immediately – don't wait for test results before calling.
- **Test** – collect a nose and throat swab, and a first pass urine sample for nucleic acid testing (PCR) and blood for measles serology (IgM and IgG).
- Mark the tests requested as URGENT. Your PHU can assist in expediting testing.

Advocate for immunisation

- Discuss vaccination with your patients – consultations prior to overseas travel are opportunities to encourage measles vaccination for any patients with uncertain vaccination histories.
- Children aged from 6 months to under 12 months can have an MMR vaccination early if travelling overseas (they will still need doses at 12 and 18 months of age).
- Measles containing vaccines (MMR) are free in NSW for those born during or after 1966 who have not previously had two documented doses.
- Health care workers are at increased risk – ensure that you and your staff are vaccinated.

Further Information:

- Measles travel posters and other resources for your clinic are available from the NSW Health measles page: www.health.nsw.gov.au/Infectious/measles
- Contact your local public health unit on **1300 066 055**



Dr Christine Selvey
A/Director, Communicable Diseases
Health Protection NSW

9 January 2020