



our best protection

# STAFF ANNOUNCEMENT: Measles Outbreak

There is currently an outbreak of measles in New Zealand. You can help to protect yourself and your whānau from this disease by getting immunised, and it's free.

## MEASLES IS SERIOUS

Measles is a disease that spreads quickly. It can cause people to feel very sick, with around 1 in 10 people needing hospital treatment. In some cases, it can lead to other complications such as permanent brain damage and death.

Anyone with measles needs to be isolated from the time they become ill until five days after the rash has appeared. Isolation means staying at home and missing out on things like school, work, sporting competitions and social events. If you are exposed to measles and can't prove that you're immune, you'll need to be isolated for at least 14 days as well.

## WHAT ARE THE SIGNS OF MEASLES?

Measles start with flu-like symptoms – fever, cough, runny nose, and sore watery red eyes. A red blotchy rash appears after a few days. The symptoms can last for several days. People are infectious from five days before the rash appears to five days after.

## GET IMMUNISED – IT'S OUR BEST PROTECTION

Measles can't easily be treated once you get it. Immunisation is the most effective way to help protect yourself, your family, your colleagues and the wider community from measles, and the vaccine is free for anyone who needs it.

Everyone born after 1 January 1969 needs to have two doses of measles vaccine (eg, MMR) to get the most effective protection. After two doses of the MMR vaccine, more than 95 percent of people are protected from measles.

If you are unsure whether you have been immunised, check your Well Child Tamariki Ora or Plunket books or contact your doctor. If you cannot find your records, the Ministry of Health recommends you get vaccinated anyway – the MMR vaccine is free and includes your appointment with the nurse, and there are no safety concerns with having an extra dose of the vaccine.

## WHO IS MOST AT RISK?

**Those aged 10 to 29 are at generally at a higher risk of catching measles, as they're least likely to have been immunised as children.**

## MORE INFORMATION

For more information about measles immunisation, call 0800 IMMUNE (0800 466 863) or visit [health.govt.nz/measles](http://health.govt.nz/measles)

Call your doctor or Healthline (0800 611 116) if you think you have measles or have been in contact with someone who has.