

MEASLES ALERT

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

H23/22847

1. **Increasing international travel means measles is a risk for both travellers and local residents.**
2. **An infant infected with measles has spent time in locations in Parramatta and Westmead on Monday 27 March whilst infectious.**
3. **Consider measles in returning travellers with fever, and in anyone with fever and a maculopapular rash.**
4. **Isolate cases of suspected measles and call Public Health on 1300 066 055.**

Measles in NSW

- An infant infected with measles spent time in Westfields Parramatta between 0900 and 1000 on Monday 27 March, Argyle Street Medical Centre, located within Westfields Parramatta between 0915 and 1000 on Monday 27 March and The Children's Hospital at Westmead emergency department waiting room between 12noon and 2130 on Monday 27 March. The infant had recently returned from India where they acquired their infection.
- Measles cases associated with international travel have also recently previously been reported in Victoria, South Australia, Queensland and New Zealand.
- Measles cases have been rare in NSW since 2020, due to travel restrictions associated with the COVID-19 pandemic. Only one case has been reported during this period, in September 2022.
- Measles remains common in many parts of the world and large outbreaks are currently occurring in many countries, including several within our region.
- Impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on immunisation programs mean globally more people may be at risk of measles, with outbreaks potentially larger and more widespread.
- Increasing international travel means the risk of measles cases occurring in NSW is increasing.

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 then spreads down the body.
- Measles in previously vaccinated people may present atypically, with milder symptoms and a slower progression to the rash.
- Cases are usually infectious from the day before the prodrome to four days after the rash onset.

How to manage suspected cases

- **Isolate:** measles is a highly contagious illness.
 - **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.

Opportunistic measles vaccination

- Consultations prior to overseas travel are opportunities to encourage measles vaccination for any patients with uncertain measles vaccination histories.
- Children aged from 6 months to under 12 months can have an MMR vaccination early if travelling overseas.
- Measles containing vaccines (MMR) are free in NSW for those born during or after 1966 who have not previously had two documented doses.

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