



TOI TE ORA PUBLIC HEALTH

Bay of Plenty + Lakes Districts

Media release | Pānui pāpāho

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Measles in Mount Maunganui

There are currently outbreaks of measles in Christchurch and Auckland, and now a case of measles has been confirmed in Mount Maunganui in the Bay of Plenty.

The vaccine that protects against measles is the MMR (measles, mumps and rubella) vaccine. "With measles now reported locally, it's most important that parents ensure that their children receive their routine MMR immunisations on time at 15 months and 4 years of age," says Dr Jim Miller, Medical Officer of Health for Toi Te Ora Public Health.

Immunisations rates in young children have been reasonably good in recent years, however older teenagers and young adults in their twenties had lower rates of immunisation and anyone in these age groups who missed their immunisations, or is uncertain if they were immunised, should speak to their family doctor about getting a dose of MMR vaccine.

"MMR provides very effective protection against measles and is completely free for children and adults who need it," says Dr Jim Miller.

If you have never had a dose of MMR vaccine now is the time to get one. After one dose of MMR vaccine about 95% of people are protected from measles, and 99% of people who have had both doses are protected from measles.

People born before 1969 are likely to be immune because measles used to be quite common and so this older age group does not need measles immunisation.

Measles is a highly infectious viral illness and is spread from person to person through the air by breathing, sneezing or coughing. Just being in the same room as someone with measles can lead to infection if you are not immune. Measles can be serious with around one in ten people who get measles needing to be hospitalised.

"The first early symptoms of measles are fever, runny nose, sore red eyes and cough. After three to five days a red, blotchy rash appears on the face and head and then spreads down the body," says Dr Miller.

"If you think you or someone in your family may have measles, stay at home and phone your doctor to alert them of your symptoms and allow them to make arrangements to assess you safely and without infecting other people, or call Healthline on 0800 611 116 for advice."

For more information:

- Toi Te Ora Public Health website: www.toiteora.govt.nz/measles
- Immunisation Advisory Centre free phone: 0800 IMMUNE (0800 466 863)
- Immunisation Advisory Centre website: www.immune.org.nz
- Ministry of Health website: www.health.govt.nz/measles



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- Don't Assume You're Immune website: www.getimmunised.org.nz



Image caption: Dr Jim Miller says with measles now reported locally, it's most important that parents ensure that their children receive their routine MMR immunisations on time at 15 months and 4 years of age.

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