

Dear Doctor

Ongoing cases of measles in the ACT

This week two people were diagnosed with measles in the ACT who have no known links to the recent outbreak associated with an ACT school. This suggests that exposure to measles has occurred in the general community, and it is likely that there will be additional cases over the next few weeks.

I urge you to encourage those susceptible to measles to have MMR vaccine.

MMR vaccine is provided free for all age groups. Two doses of MMR vaccine (at least 4 weeks apart) are required for optimal protection and are recommended for:

- All adolescents and adults born after 1965 who do not have documented evidence of receiving two doses of measles containing vaccine or serological evidence of measles immunity;
- Children 12 months of age or older.
 - As per the National Immunisation Program Schedule: First dose at 12 months and second dose at 3 ½ to 4 years.
 - Non-immunised children 12 months to 3 ½ years: one dose MMR, second dose at 3 ½ to 4 years (at least 4 weeks apart).
 - Non-immunised children 3 ½ and over: 2 doses MMR vaccine 4 weeks apart.

Adults born before 1966 do not require MMR vaccine unless serological evidence suggests otherwise.

Please immediately notify any confirmed or suspected cases of measles to the Health Protection Service of ACT Health. HPS arranges urgent post-exposure prophylaxis for people exposed to measles to reduce the chance of further transmission.

- If patients present with symptoms and/or signs consistent with measles, please obtain serology and a throat swab to confirm or exclude the diagnosis.
- Clinical diagnoses of measles must be notified by telephone to the Health Protection Service. This enables rapid identification of potential contacts who may benefit from post-exposure prophylaxis to reduce further transmission of this illness.
- If a patient is suspected to have measles, please ensure that they are appropriately isolated to reduce the likelihood of the infection spreading to others in the waiting room.
- Advise people with measles symptoms to stay isolated at home until four days after the rash appears.

To notify a case of measles or seek advice in relation to measles, please contact Health Protection Service on 6205 2155 or page the public health officer on call on 99624155 after hours.

Yours sincerely



Dr Andrew Pengilley
A/g Chief Health Officer
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