

Public Health Alert

Issued: 3/2/2025
Issued to: NT healthcare providers

Measles Alert - Be alert for cases of measles

Summary

- A confirmed case of measles has been notified to the NT Centre for Disease Control (CDC) in an adult who had travelled recently to Indonesia.
- Measles is a highly infectious viral illness, which is spread by breathing in air droplets. There are ongoing outbreaks of measles in multiple countries across south-east Asia, and this case is the 7th case notified in recently returned travellers in Australia since 1 January 2025.
- The case was detected at Palmerston Regional Hospital. Patients and staff present in the Emergency Department during the case's presentation times have been identified and contacted by the NT CDC. The case was also present at the following locations while infectious:
 - Friday 24 January**
 - Air North Flight TL160 from Darwin to Cairns (stopover in Gove)
 - Monday 27 January**
 - Air North Flight TL161 from Cairns to Darwin (stopover in Gove)
 - Darwin International Airport arrivals and luggage pickup, 4pm – 5pm
 - Tuesday 28 January**
 - Mckinnon Snack Bar and Takeaway Berrimah, 9am-9.30am
- A number of locations were also identified in Cairns, and can be found on the Health service's Facebook page, here: [Measles... - Cairns and Hinterland Hospital and Health Service | Facebook](#)
- Symptoms include fever, conjunctivitis, cough, coryza, and a maculopapular rash which begins on the face and neck, and spreads over the rest of the body. It can take up to 18 days to develop symptoms.
- There may be other locally-acquired cases in the community which might present over the next 3 weeks, so please be alert for symptoms of measles even in those who haven't travelled.
- **The best protection against measles is vaccination** – encourage all patients and staff to check their vaccination status, and ensure they are up to date with measles vaccination.

Action

- Please think of measles in anyone presenting with fever and rash. Isolate the person and test with 3 samples:
 - 1 urine sample (PCR measles)
 - 1 throat swab (PCR measles)

- 1 nose swab up both nostrils (PCR measles)

Samples should be forwarded to Royal Darwin Hospital (or nearest public hospital) following discussion with Centre for Disease Control (CDC) on (08) 8922 8044.

Transmission

- Measles is highly contagious and can be spread by brief casual contact. Contacts are defined as having shared the same air space in enclosed areas as a case for any length of time.
- Measles virus may remain in environments up to 30 minutes after the case has left.
- It may take up to 18 days for symptoms to develop. Cases are considered infectious from 24 hours before the onset of first symptoms, or from 4 days prior to the rash developing if no prodromal symptoms, until 4 days after the rash has developed.
- Contacts of asymptomatic contacts are not currently considered to be at risk of infection.

Clinical Management

Importantly:

- Notify the CDC immediately of any suspected cases on (08) 8922 8044.
- Do not send patients with suspected measles to pathology collection centres.
- Do not sit suspected measles patients in the general waiting areas. See them in a separate room (the room should not be used for susceptible patients/staff for 30 minutes following the consultation with the suspected case).
- Ensure that all your staff are immune, i.e. they have either had measles or have had 2 doses of measles-containing vaccine at least 4 weeks apart.
- Anyone with confirmed measles should be excluded from work, school, and other places where susceptible people may be, until at least 4 days after the onset of their rash.
- MMR vaccinations are available for free in NT for people who are unvaccinated (and have not had measles), or have only had a single dose. GP's, Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Services, other health care clinics and vaccinating pharmacies can provide MMR vaccination.

For more information about measles, including information for contacts of measles, the public, and healthcare providers, visit this link: [Measles | NT Health](#)



Contact & advice

View all CDC units NT wide at the [NT Health website](#).

See here for more on Public Health Alerts [Health alerts | NT Health](#)

Issued on behalf of the Director, Centre for Disease Control, Public Health Division, NT Health

Centre for Disease Control
Public Health Division

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