



Centre for Disease Control

NT HEALTH

Public Health Alert

Issued: 30/4/2025
Issued to: NT healthcare providers

Measles Alert - Be alert for cases of measles

Summary

- Measles cases have been increasing across Australia this year to-date, with 67 cases notified since 1 January, including 1 case notified in the NT who had travelled overseas.
- Measles outbreaks continue in multiple countries across the world, with cases in Australia linked to travel from Vietnam, Indonesia, the Philippines, and Pakistan.
- An increasing number of measles cases have recently been **acquired in Australia**, with local outbreaks reported in Western Australia and Victoria (Melbourne suburbs) following cases in returned overseas travellers.
- Clinicians in the NT are strongly encouraged to consider measles in their differential diagnosis for anyone presenting with fever and rash, particularly if they have travelled internationally **or interstate**.
- Measles is a highly infectious viral illness, which is spread by breathing in air droplets. 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.
- **Immunity to measles requires either having had measles, or being completely vaccinated. Those born before 1966 are considered immune – those born on or after 1966 must have had 2 measles-containing vaccines after 12 months of age, or have had measles to be immune.** Encourage all patients and staff to check their vaccination status, and ensure they are immune to measles. Offer or recommend measles vaccination if non-immune, or immunity is unknown.

Action

- Please consider 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. The CDC can help you to get the test completed as quickly as possible.

Centre for Disease Control
Public Health Division

 (08) 8922 8044 or 1800 008 002
 CDCSurveillance.DARWIN@nt.gov.au

Transmission

- Measles is highly contagious and is 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 born after 1966 who have no evidence of 2 previous measles vaccines.** 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



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