

Don't Let Measles Leave You High and Dry

Since December 2013 there have been 62 confirmed cases of measles in New Zealand. The majority of these cases have been in secondary school students. A total of 8 cases have required hospital treatment.

Measles is highly infectious. Measles starts with a fever, cough, runny nose and/or sore eyes followed a few days later by a rash. People are infectious from 5 days before to 5 days after the rash appears.

Immunisation remains the best way to prevent infection and spread within the community. It is important that students attending inter-school events namely regattas such as Maadi Cup are fully immunised with 2 doses of the measles/mumps/rubella (MMR) vaccine. Immunisation is free to New Zealand residents.

Unimmunised people exposed to measles will need to be quarantined for at least 14 days. This will mean missing school, training and regattas.

If you don't want your school rowers to be left high and dry please encourage them to get immunised as soon as possible.

Schools are recommended to record the names of students attending interschool regatta who are not immunised. This will enable public health officials to quickly identify those at risk should the need arise.

If you or a student develop symptoms of measles call Healthline on 0800 611 116 for advice as soon as possible.

For further information on measles and measles immunisation please visit the Ministry of Health website <http://www.health.govt.nz/measles> or the Immunisation Advisory Centre website <http://www.immune.org.nz>. You can also call the Immunisation Advisory Centre toll-free on 0800 IMMUNE (0800 466 863) for advice.