



**Waitemata**  
District Health Board  
**Best Care for Everyone**

**Communications Dept**

**Corporate Office**

*Level 2, 15 Shea Terrace*

*Private Bag 93-503, Takapuna*

*Auckland 0740*

*Telephone: 09 486 8955*

**Media release**

7 March 2016

**Measles Alert – immunise to protect your child from a serious disease**

Waitemata District Health Board (DHB) is asking parents to make sure their child's immunisations are up-to-date following confirmation of recent measles cases in the Auckland region.

Measles is a serious and extremely infectious disease and immunisation is the most effective protection. Two free immunisations are given at 15 months and four years of age to protect against measles, mumps and rubella.

Waitemata DHB Chief Executive Dr Dale Bramley says most children in the Waitemata district are immunised against the disease but there is concern for those in our community who are not protected.

"The only way to protect against measles is to be fully immunised and, with recent cases confirmed in the Auckland region, we ask parents to make up-to-date immunisation a priority."

"Two doses of the measles vaccine are all that is required to protect yourself, your family and the wider community from this preventable disease."

Currently, 92 percent of two-year olds living in the Waitemata District have had their first 15-month-old measles immunisation. In the last 12 months, 424 children in the region have been late for their immunisation and may still need to catch up.

Another 1440 five-year olds in the district were overdue for their immunisation in the last year, having had only one measles immunisation. A second dose is required at four years for long-term protection.

Children who have a weakened immune system are at greater risk from measles. These children are often unable to be immunised and rely on protection from those in their community being immunised.

Measles is a very infectious viral disease that starts with a high fever and respiratory symptoms (one or more of the following: runny nose, cough, red eyes and small white spots inside the mouth). Three or four days after catching measles a red blotchy rash appears, starting on the neck and face, then spreading over the entire body. The rash is not itchy and fades during the first week.

Recent cases of measles in the community are a reminder to be on-time every time with all infant and childhood immunisations.

Babies should receive scheduled immunisations at age six weeks, three months and five months, vaccinating against a raft of serious diseases including rotavirus, pneumococcal, diphtheria, tetanus,

pertussis (whooping cough), polio and hepatitis B. The full immunisation schedule is available on the [Ministry of Health website](#).

More than 555 8 month old babies in the Waitemata district were late for their immunisations in the last 12 months and vulnerable to preventable diseases. If you suspect you or your child may have missed or is late for an immunisation, contact your family doctor.

Parents and caregivers can seek more information on the vaccine from their GP or practice nurse, by phoning the Immunisation Advisory Centre information line 0800 IMMUNE (466 863) or by visiting [www.immune.org.nz](http://www.immune.org.nz)

Further information on measles is available on the Auckland Regional Public Health Service website: <http://www.arphs.govt.nz/health-information/communicable-disease/measles>

ENDS

**For further information contact:**

Matt Rogers

Senior Advisor External Affairs

021 228 9432

[matthew.rogers@waitematadhb.govt.nz](mailto:matthew.rogers@waitematadhb.govt.nz)