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## Measles cases in Val Thorens: France

**Travellers to the area should check that they are protected against measles**

The Regional Health Agency of Auvergne Rhone Alpes reported an increase in measles cases in the region since the beginning of 2019. In addition, 18 cases of measles have been reported since the end of January 2019 in Val Thorens (Savoie). Most cases have occurred in young adults residing in the resort for seasonal work [1].

Val Thorens is a popular ski destination in the French Alps, part of the Three Valleys (Les Trois Vallées) resort. Many British and other tourists will have planned a visit to this resort over the 2019 winter and spring season for winter sports activities.

### Advice for travellers

Before travel, check that you are fully protected against measles (i.e. a known history of past infection or a record of two doses of a measles containing vaccine).

Measles is a highly infectious viral illness, it is spread by airborne or droplet transmission. You can get the infection by breathing in these droplets or touching a contaminated surface and then placing your hands near your nose or mouth. The illness can be very unpleasant and sometimes leads to serious complications.

Initial symptoms can include fever, runny nose, conjunctivitis and cough. A rash usually appears a few days later that starts at the head and spreads to the trunk and limbs over three to four days. Individuals are infectious from the time the first symptom appears to four days after the appearance of the rash. The incubation period (the time from exposure to the virus to developing symptoms) is about ten days (ranging between seven and 18 days).

The measles, mumps and rubella (MMR) vaccine is available to all adults and children who are not up to date with their two doses [2]. Anyone who is not sure if they are protected should check with their GP practice.

In the UK, MMR is usually given to infants at around 12 months of age with a second dose given before school, to ensure best protection. In some cases, MMR can be offered to babies from 6 months of age (e.g. for travel to countries where measles is common, or during an outbreak situation). Ask your health professional for advice on the best option for your children before you travel. MMR vaccine can be given at any age (from 6 months), and young adults who are not sure whether they are vaccinated, should have the MMR vaccine. Two doses of MMR in a lifetime are needed for a person to be considered fully protected [3].

### Advice for health professionals

Guidance on measles vaccination is available in [Immunisation against infectious disease Chapter 21](#). Advice on immunisation against measles is also available for those whose [immunisation status is uncertain](#). In the UK, measles is a [notifiable disease](#). Any case of suspected measles should be notified to the [local Health Protection Team](#).

## Resources

- [Measles in brief](#)
- [Public Health England: Measles: guidance, data and analysis](#)
- [Public Health England: MMR for all, general leaflet](#)

## References

1. [The Regional Health Agency Auvergne Rhone Alpes, Measles recrudescence. 8 February 2019 \[Accessed 13 February 2019\]](#)
2. [National Health Service. Who should have the MMR vaccine? 10 July 2018. \[Accessed 13 February 2019\]](#)
3. [Public Health England. Measles. Chapter 21, Immunisation against Infectious Disease. Last updated 1 July 2013. \[Accessed 13 February 2019\]](#)