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Measles outbreak in New Zealand

MMR advice for babies from six months to under 12 months of age travelling to Auckland

Since 1 January 2019, a total of 2113 measles cases have been confirmed in New Zealand, with 1692 of these cases reported in the Auckland region. As a result, the Ministry of Health in New Zealand is advising that babies aged between six and 11 months inclusive, who live in or who are travelling to Auckland, should be offered the mumps, measles, and rubella vaccine ([MMR](#)) [1].

Immunisation before one year of age provides earlier protection in areas where the risk of measles is higher, but residual maternal antibodies may reduce the response to the vaccine. If MMR is given before the first birthday, then this dose should be ignored. Two further doses should then be given at the recommended times: one between 12 and 13 months of age (i.e. within a month of the first birthday) and a second at three years, four months to five years of age, before school entry [2] as per the UK immunisation schedule.

Advice for travellers

Make sure you and your family are all up to date with the [UK immunisation schedule](#).

MMR vaccine can be considered for babies from six months of age travelling to countries where measles occurs commonly or when there is an outbreak.

If your child is given MMR vaccine before their first birthday, it is important that they then have two further routine MMR doses offered in the UK at the recommended times.

Advice for health professionals

MMR given to a baby aged between six and 11 months is considered a supplementary dose and not part of the routine UK schedule. Two further doses, given at the times recommended in the UK immunisation schedule, should also be offered [2].

Resources

- [Public Health England. Measles: guidance, data and analysis](#)
- [WHO: Measles and rubella surveillance data](#)

References

1. [New Zealand Ministry of Health. 2019 measles outbreak information. 27 November 2019. \[Accessed 28 November 2019\]](#)
2. [Public Health England. Measles. Ch 21. In: Immunisation against infectious disease. Last updated 31 October 2019. \[Accessed 28 November 2019\]](#)