



MMR (Measles Mumps Rubella vaccination) Key Points

- Measles is a highly infectious disease - about 8 times more contagious than COVID-19.
- Measles often causes severe sickness, even in young and healthy people. In 2019, 1151 people in Counties Manukau got the measles, and 434 were hospitalised. Over 25% of people aged 10-29 years old with measles in 2019 were hospitalised.
- Measles is very bad for babies – 64% of babies with measles in 2019 were hospitalised.
- The first MMR vaccine for babies is at 12 months. The best protection under 12 months is for everyone around them to be immunised.
- MMR vaccine is very effective at protecting people from measles. It is 95% protective with one vaccination, and 99% protective with two vaccinations. Protection is life-long.
- Many people aged 16-30 years did not get fully immunised when they were children, and do not know they're at risk of measles, mumps or rubella. **If there is any doubt they had an MMR, vaccinate.** We need pharmacy to get this message out and vaccinate widely.
- MMR vaccination is **FREE** for people* up to the age of 49 years old.
- Measles is just a plane ride away – when we open up borders after COVID-19, it just takes one person to pick up measles overseas to infect our community again. **We need your help to get our community protected now.**

Please be proactive.

Ensure all pharmacy staff read this page and put it on your staff notice board. Talk to people 16-30 years old about measles and MMR. Talk to women who are pregnant or have a baby to ensure everyone around them under 49 years has had an MMR (MMR **not** given in pregnancy). Talk to your older patients, their children may be in the target age range. 65% in the 2019 outbreak were Māori or Pacific. Please prioritise these groups.

Other points

- People over 49 years were very likely exposed to measles when young – no MMR needed.
- Having a measles or rubella infection when pregnant can harm the baby – women should ensure they are vaccinated **before** pregnancy (MMR is **not** given in pregnancy).
- People born overseas might not have had any MMR vaccine.
- The pharmacist can check the National Immunisation Register (NIR) to see if someone has had MMR vaccination. If there is no MMR vaccination on the NIR and they might not have had it, give a dose to ensure they are protected. MMR was put on the NIR from 2005.
- Enter all MMR vaccinations on the NIR.
- Pharmacies can provide MMR vaccination free to anyone aged 16-49*. The first vaccination is the most important, but a second vaccination can be given 4 weeks later.
- MMR is a very safe, well-tested vaccine and generally well-tolerated. Fever and rash sometimes happen 6-12 days after having it, and swollen salivary glands can occur. These are a normal part of forming immunity. MMR **does not** cause autism.
- MMR promotional campaign will ramp up from February 2021, please help us make it work!

We aim to have as many people as possible aged 16-30 years vaccinated with an MMR vaccine in the next few months, especially Māori and Pacific.

References: Immunisation Handbook 2020; ESR measles report week 1 2020. Pharmacy Leaflet CMDHB 20/01/21

*Residency criteria may apply