

# How to keep everyone safe from measles



**Updated: May 2022**

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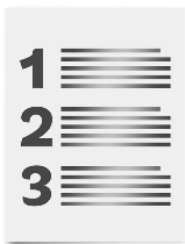
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# About measles



**Measles** is an illness that can make you very sick.

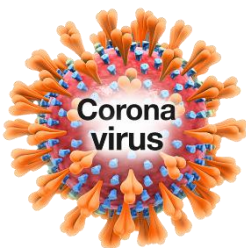


This booklet is about keeping yourself safe from measles.

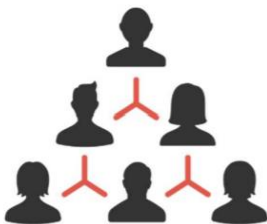


Measles can affect:

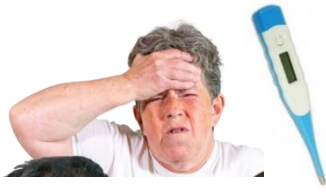
- adults
- children.



It is even more **contagious** than COVID-19.

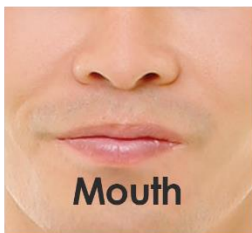


**Contagious** means it can easily pass from person to person.



People with measles may have:

- a high temperature of at least 38°C on a thermometer – this is when you would feel very hot
- a cough
- a runny nose
- eyes that are:
  - sore
  - watery
  - pink
- small white spots at the back of their cheek inside their mouth.



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It may take between 7 and 18 days for a person to get measles if they have been around someone who has measles.

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During days 3 and 7 of having measles people may have a **rash**.



A **rash** is when parts of your skin become:

- swollen
- red
- itchy.



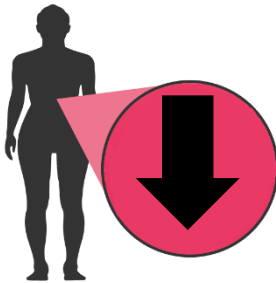
The rash starts:

- on your face
- behind the ears.



Then the rash moves:

- over your head
- down your body.



The rash lasts for up to a week.



For every 10 people who get measles about 3 of them will also get other problems like:



- ear infections which can cause hearing loss

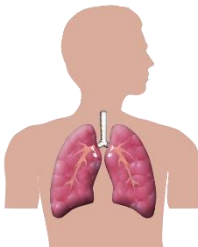


- seizures

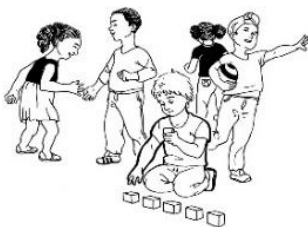


- swelling of the brain – this does not happen often

- diarrhoea



- pneumonia which is an infection in 1 or both lungs.



These problems usually happen in:

- children under 5 years old

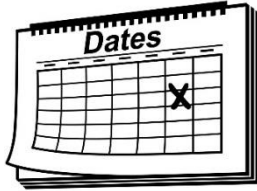


- adults over 20 years old.



If you get measles while you are pregnant you are more likely to:

- lose your baby before 20 weeks of being pregnant
- have your baby early.



Having measles while pregnant may also affect the health of the baby.



Your baby may be born weighing less than they should.

# Measles in New Zealand

2019



In 2019 more than 2 thousand people had measles in New Zealand.

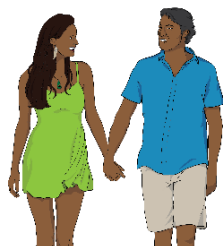


7 hundred people who had measles had to go to hospital.

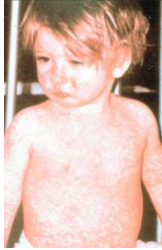


People that were affected the most were:

- Māori
- Pasifika.



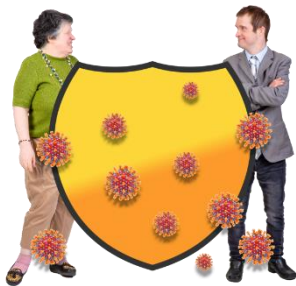
# How to keep yourself safe from measles



We need almost everyone to be **vaccinated** against measles.

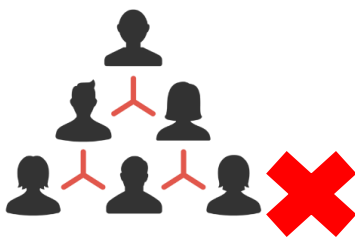


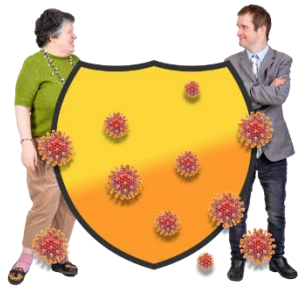
Being **vaccinated** means you get an injection in your arm usually given to you by a nurse at your doctors.



Being **vaccinated** also means you are less likely to:

- get measles
- spread measles.





Getting vaccinated to protect yourself from measles:

- is easy
- does not cost money.



The best way to protect yourself is by getting the **Measles Mumps and Rubella Vaccine**.

Sometimes the Measles Mumps and Rubella Vaccine is also called the **MMR vaccine**.



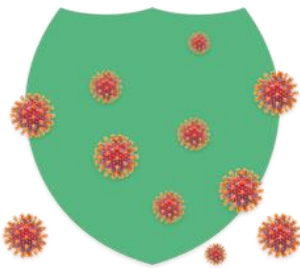
The MMR vaccine has been used in New Zealand since 1990.

## What is in the MMR vaccine?



The MMR vaccine is made of very small amounts of weak:

- measles germs
- mumps germs
- rubella germs.



There are small amounts of other stuff in the MMR vaccine that are also found in:

- foods
- drinks.



## What the MMR vaccine does



The MMR vaccine helps protect you against 3 serious diseases:

- measles
- mumps which causes swelling in your:
  - glands
  - face
- rubella which causes a red rash.



The MMR vaccine is given as an injection in your arm.

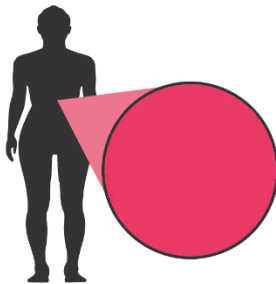


The MMR vaccine works very well.



A few people who are fully immunised may still get sick from measles.

But they usually only get a little sick.



The MMR vaccine helps your body make **antibodies** that fight measles.

**Antibodies** are tiny cells in your blood that fight infections.



Some other countries only immunise against:

- measles
- rubella.



Even if you are immunised against measles in another country make sure you get your free MMR vaccine in New Zealand.



This will mean you are protected from mumps too.

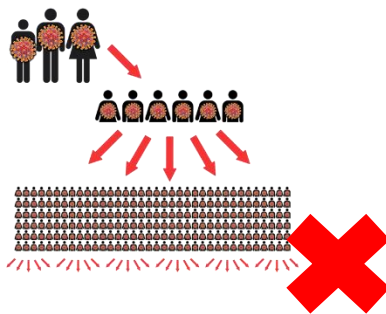


To be fully immunised everyone needs to get the MMR vaccine **2 times.**





When almost everyone is immune to measles we can reach **community immunity**.



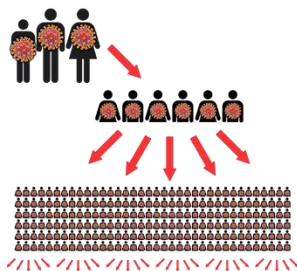
**Community immunity** means that everyone in the community is less likely to:

- get measles
- spread measles.



Lots of people born between 1989 and 2004 did not get the 2 MMR vaccines when they were children.

This means they are could get:



- get measles
- spread measles.



To check if you had 2 MMR vaccines ask your:

- doctor
- parents
- caregiver.



If you do not know if you had 2 MMR vaccine doses then it is best to get another injection again.



It is safe to have an extra dose of the MMR vaccine.

# Where to get the MMR vaccine

## 1. Your doctor



You can get the MMR vaccine from your **doctor**.



The MMR vaccine will not cost you any money.



You **may** need to call your doctor to make an appointment.



After you have had the MMR vaccine you will be asked to wait at the doctors for 20 minutes.



This is to check that you do not feel unwell after getting your MMR vaccine.



## 2. Your pharmacy

You can also get the MMR vaccine from some pharmacies if you are **between**:



- 16 years old
- to
- 50 years old.



**Before you go** you should call your pharmacy to check if they can give you the MMR vaccine.



You **do not** need to make an appointment if you are going to your pharmacy.



The pharmacists will take you to a private space in the pharmacy to give you the MMR vaccine.



The MMR vaccine will not cost you any money



After you have had the MMR vaccine you will be asked to wait at the pharmacy for 20 minutes.



This is to check that you do not feel unwell after getting your MMR vaccine.

# What can happen after you get the MMR vaccine

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1 or 2 days after getting their MMR vaccine some people may have:

- a headache
- a slight fever – feeling hot
- nausea – feeling sick



They may also feel:

- like fainting or feeling faint – eating before getting your MMR vaccine will help
- a bit unwell.



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22	23	24	25	26	27	28
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Between 5 and 12 days after getting an MMR vaccine less than 1 in 10 people may get:

- a mild fever – feeling hot
- a rash
- swollen glands in their neck.

It is **very unlikely** anything serious will happen after getting the MMR vaccine.



It would happen within 20 minutes of getting the MMR vaccine.



This is why you will be asked to wait for 20 minutes after getting your MMR vaccine.



If you do have a reaction the person who gave you your MMR vaccine will help you.



You will be told again about possible reactions when you are about to get your MMR vaccine.

## Who cannot have the MMR vaccine?



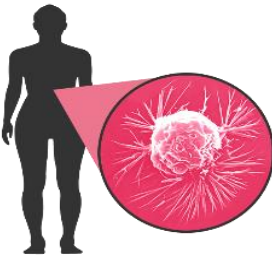
There are very few people who cannot have the MMR vaccine.



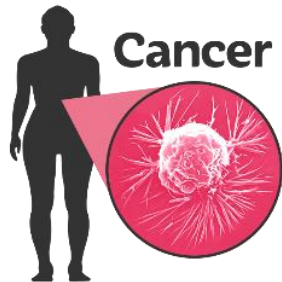
You **cannot** have the MMR vaccine when you:



- are pregnant
- are very young



- have a serious illness that affects your immune system.



Before you get your MMR vaccine talk to your health professional if you:

- have had a serious reaction to a vaccine in the past
- are being treated for a serious illness like cancer
- had a blood transfusion in the last year.

## Good reasons to get immunised



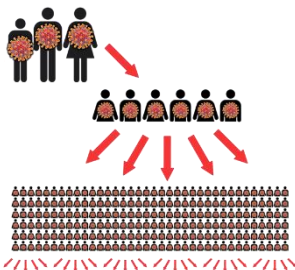
1. You might make other people very sick if you get measles

Getting the MMR vaccine means you are less likely to spread measles.



2. You may have to stay home for 2 weeks if you have:

- not had the MMR vaccine
- been in the same room as someone else who has measles.



This would be to help stop the spread of measles.



### 3. Measles is only a plane ride away



Measles is still common in many countries.



People can bring measles into New Zealand without knowing.



If you have not had the MMR vaccine you could get measles if you travel to certain countries.

## Where to find more information



For more information about the measles vaccine you can go to:

**[www.health.govt.nz/MeaslesVaccine](http://www.health.govt.nz/MeaslesVaccine)**



You can also get more information about the measles vaccine by talking to your:

- doctor
- pharmacy.





This information has been written by the Ministry of Health.



It has been translated into Easy Read with advice from the Make It Easy service of People First New Zealand Inc. Ngā Tāngata Tuatahi.



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