

**Centre for Disease Control  
Public Health Unit, Primary  
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**MEASLES ALERT**  
Infectious measles case in Darwin  
from 25 October 2019

Date: 04/11/ 2019

Dear Doctor

**Please be alert for cases of measles.** There has been a case diagnosed on 1 November in a traveller recently returned to Darwin from Cambodia. The recent Darwin case has visited the following places since becoming infectious on 25 October:

- Mitchell Street Venues
- Nightcliff shops and Nightcliff Subway
- Supercheap Auto, Homemaker Village
- Territory Trophies and Precision Engraving in Woolner
- 2 GP practices and the Emergency Department at Royal Darwin Hospital

In addition over the last fortnight there have been at least 28 cases of measles notified nationally – the majority being in Qld and WA. New Zealand has had a recent very large surge in cases with almost 2,000 cases of measles notified for the year, the majority being over the last few months.

There may be other locally-acquired cases in the community who will present over the next 3 weeks, so please be alert for symptoms of measles even in those who have not travelled. However always remember to take a travel history recognising time spent in e.g., planes and airports and in countries with endemic measles puts people at risk. Likewise make sure your travel advice to patients includes ensuring they are measles immune i.e. they have either had measles or have had 2 doses of measles-containing vaccine at least 4 weeks apart.

Please think of measles in anyone presenting with fever and rash. Isolate the person and test with 3 samples:

- 1 urine sample (PCR measles)
- 1 throat swab (PCR measles)
- 1 nose swab up both nostrils (PCR measles)

Samples should be forwarded to Royal Darwin Hospital (or nearest public hospital) following discussion with Centre for Disease Control (CDC) on 89228044.

Importantly:

- Notify the CDC immediately of any suspected cases (see below);
- Do not send patients with suspected measles to pathology collection centres;
- Do not sit suspected measles patients in the general waiting areas. See them in a separate room (the room should not be used for susceptible patients/staff for 30 minutes following the consultation with the suspected case);

- Ensure that all your staff are immune, ie they have either had measles or have had 2 doses of measles-containing vaccine at least 4 weeks apart.

Measles is highly contagious and can be spread by brief casual contact. Measles starts with a prodrome of fever, cough, coryza, conjunctivitis followed 2-4 days later with a maculopapular rash which classically starts on the face or neck. The symptoms can be milder in those who have some immunity.

A media release has been issued to alert the public to the possibility of becoming ill and to seek medical attention.

Yours sincerely,



Dr Vicki Krause

Director, Centre for Disease Control of the Public Health Unit, Primary Health Care, Top End Health Service  
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