

Global increase in measles cases

Measles cases are increasing globally, with recent reports of outbreaks in Europe and India and limited spread in USA and Quebec. Travel-acquired measles cases in Island Health are possible, which could lead to local outbreaks.

Vaccination is best defense

- Vaccination is very effective for long-lasting protection against infection (85-95% after 1 dose, ~98% after 2 doses)
- 2 dose series routinely given at 1 year and 4-6 years of age; ~10% of 7 year olds have not received any doses
- Eligibility (complete details at bit.ly/BCCDCMMR)
 - Born before January 1, 1970: likely immune through prior infection, eligible for 1 dose if no history of measles vaccination nor disease
 - Born on/after January 1, 1970: eligible for 2 doses of measles vaccine in lifetime
 - Infants age 6 months - 1 year can receive an early extra dose if travelling to area with measles transmission
- Refer eligible children to local health unit (islandhealth.ca/our-locations/health-unit-locations), adults to bcpharmacy.ca/pharmacy-services/mmr or health unit, or provide directly in clinic (see bit.ly/CVPislandhealth)
- Public Health is going into select schools for kindergarten and grade 1 catch-up

Thinking measles?

When to consider

Risk factors (*in the absence of a local outbreak, it is extremely unlikely that any patient has measles without both of the following*):

- travel in last month OR contact with known case
- Under/unvaccinated AND born after 1969

Signs and symptoms:

- Rash (descending maculopapular) after prodrome of fever, cough, coryza, conjunctivitis

Reporting

Legally required to report all suspected measles cases to public health. If suspicious enough to test, ensure to report:

South Island	250-388-2225
Central Island	250-740-2615
North Island	250-331-8555
Afterhours/weekends	1-800-204-6166

Testing if suspected measles

PCR (critical):

- NP swab (preferred; COPAN red-top in UTM) OR nasal and throat (COPAN blue-top in UTM)
- Urine

Complete req (bit.ly/BCCDCvirology), submit to Island Health Lab (preferred for less travel time) or BCCDC

Serology (valuable, but not critical):

- Measles IgM & IgG
- Parvovirus B19 IgM
- Rubella IgM

Provide req (bit.ly/BCCDCserology), have patient/parent call lab in advance for infection prevention instructions

Advice to patients & families

Suspected case:

- Isolate as much as possible and await direction from public health
- Monitor for worsening illness, especially dehydration, lethargy, shortness of breath; seek urgent medical care if any of these develop (call ED in advance as precautions needed)

Contacts of suspected case:

- If ill, isolate and seek testing
- If well, do not need to quarantine unless directed by public health

Island Health Medical Health Officers

Chief: Dr. Réka Gustafson 250-519-3406 North Island: Dr. Charmaine Enns 250-331-8591

Central Island: 250-739-6304 Cowichan Region: Dr. Shannon Waters 250-737-2020

South Island: Dr. Mike Benusic, Dr. Murray Fyfe, Dr. Dee Hoyano 250-519-3406

islandhealth.ca/about-us/medical-health-officers