

Thursday 23rd April, 2026

## **Protecting against measles**

Dear Parents and Caregivers,

The Melbourne Archdiocese of Catholic Schools, MACS, has encouraged schools to share recent information regarding the rising cases of measles in our community.

Measles cases are [rising in Victoria and around the world](#). Returned travellers make up most cases, but local spread has also been detected.

Vaccination is the most safe and effective way to protect yourself and others against measles. People need 2 doses of a measles-containing vaccine to be fully protected.

To help protect against measles, you should check your family's measles vaccinations today. This is particularly important if you are:

- planning any travel
- were born during or after 1966
- were born overseas.

You can check your measles vaccination records:

- on your Medicare online account through [MyGov](#) or by contacting the [Australian Immunisation Register](#) on 1800 653 809
- on your personal health records, such as your childhood immunisation records
- by speaking to your GP or immunisation provider.

## **About measles**

[Measles](#) is a viral infection. It spreads easily from airborne droplets, such as from coughing or sneezing, and nose and throat secretions.

Symptoms may include:

- fever
- feeling tired or unwell
- cough or runny nose
- sore and red eyes (conjunctivitis)
- diarrhoea – especially in infants.

This is usually followed by a red, blotchy, non-itchy rash that often starts on the face before spreading down the body.

Measles can cause serious illness and be life-threatening. People who are not fully immunised or have not had a previous measles infection are at increased risk.

Pregnant women, children aged under 5 years and those with weakened immune systems are at increased risk of severe illness and complications.

If your child develops measles symptoms, you should:

- keep your child home from school and seek medical care and testing
- call the health service and wear a face mask when travelling to and attending the health service
- let our school know if your child has measles, or is being tested for measles
- keep your child at home until well and advised by a health professional.

## **Free measles vaccines**

Anyone who does not have 2 doses of measles vaccine, or is unsure, can get a measles vaccine.

Free vaccines are available for:

- infants aged 12 months to 18 months
- children and teenagers aged under 20 years
- adult refugees and humanitarian entrants.

Free vaccines are also available for anyone with or without a Medicare card if they are:

- born during or after 1966 who have not received 2 doses or are unsure, including people born overseas
- infants from 6 months and before 11 months of age before overseas travel.

Vaccination is widely available at your GP, local pharmacist, local council or Aboriginal Health Service. Call ahead to see if you are eligible for a free vaccine.

If your child has had new or catch-up vaccines, we encourage you to give our school an updated immunisation history statement.

## **Find out more**

For more information, refer to:

- the Better Health Channel web page [How to find your immunisation records](#)
- the Department of Health for translated resources about [measles](#) and [measles immunisations](#)
- your GP, local pharmacist, local council or Aboriginal Health Service.

*A. Herbison*

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PRINCIPAL