

8 March 2019

Measles alert for South West Sydney

South Western Sydney Local Health District (SWSLHD) is urging people to stay on alert for symptoms of measles following diagnosis of measles in an infant who acquired the infection overseas.

This latest case of measles has pushed the total number of people infectious with measles in the state since Christmas to 20.

The infant was too young to receive routine vaccinations prior to a trip to South East Asia, and developed the disease after his return to Sydney. He is now recovering in hospital.

The infant was in the following locations while infectious:

- Stockland Wetherill Park Shopping Centre, Saturday March 2, between 1:30 pm and 3:30 pm
- DAO Practice, 133 Cabramatta Rd, Tuesday March 5, between 10am and 1pm
- Fairfield Hospital ED, Wednesday March 6, between 2 am and 12 pm

SWSLHD Public Health Unit's Director Dr Naru Pal said while the above locations do not pose any ongoing risk to the public, people who were at the locations at the same time as the infant should look out for symptoms until March 23.

"Children and adults who had been inadvertently exposed were at risk of developing measles if they were not already immune," Dr Pal said.

The SWSLHD public health unit is working with health services to contact people and other patients present at the same time and offering preventive treatment, if needed.

"If you develop symptoms please call ahead to your GP so that you do not wait in the waiting room with other patients," Dr Pal said.

"The measles-mumps-rubella (MMR) vaccine is safe and highly effective protection against measles. NSW Health offers free MMR vaccine via GPs for anyone born during or after 1966 who hasn't already had two doses. If you are unsure whether you have had two doses, it is quite safe to have another dose."

SWSLHD is urging people travelling overseas to ensure they are fully vaccinated before heading off.

Outbreaks of measles in popular tourist destinations means the risk for measles being imported into Australia at the moment is high.

Measles is highly contagious and is spread in the air through coughing or sneezing by someone who is unwell with the disease.

Symptoms of measles include fever, sore eyes and a cough followed three or four days later by a red, blotchy rash spreading from the head and neck to the rest of the body.

For more information on measles, visit:

http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/Infectious/factsheets/Pages/Measles_Factsheet.aspx