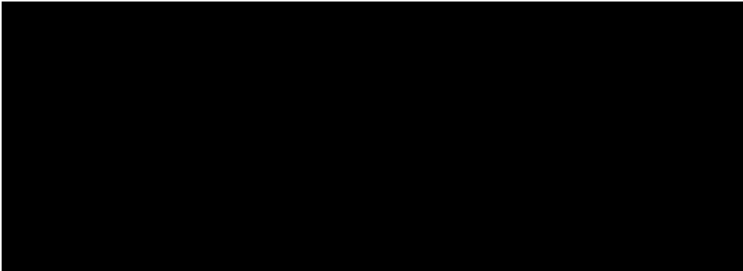


13 AUG 2019



Response to your request for official information

Thank you for your request under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act) which was transferred from Waitemata District Health Board, and received by the Ministry of Health (the Ministry) on 16 July 2019 requesting:

“Under the OIA 1982 Act, can you please advise how many measles cases have been confirmed as caused by vaccine strains of the virus over the last 5 years, and the time interval between each case and their last MMR vaccination?”

The measles, mumps and rubella (MMR) vaccine does not cause measles.

The MMR vaccine is made from a live virus that is weakened and causes the immune system to recognise the virus and develop immunity to it. After the MMR vaccine is administered, the immune response is heightened and as a consequence of this, some individuals can present with mild local or systemic symptoms.

Local symptoms are not uncommon following administration of the MMR vaccine. Within 24 hours of vaccination, recipients may experience pain and tenderness at the injection site which is generally mild, transient and resolves within 2 to 3 days.

Systemic symptoms can include fever, which occurs in about 5-15% of MMR vaccine recipients and a rash, which occurs in approximately 5% of recipients. These symptoms usually occur between 6 and 12 days post vaccination and last approximately 1 to 2 days. In many cases, these symptoms may be coincidental due to other infections.

These mild adverse events occur less frequently after the second dose of a measles-containing vaccine and tend to only occur in individuals that are not protected by the first dose. The first dose gives protection from measles in 95% of people and after the second dose, 99% of people are protected.

Therefore, the answer to your request is that there are no cases of measles that have been confirmed as caused by a vaccine strain of the virus.

The number of measles cases notified in the last 5 years, broken down by district health board, is publicly available on the Institute of Environmental Science and Research Public Health Surveillance website: <https://surv.esr.cri.nz/surveillance/surveillance.php>.

I trust that this information fulfils your request. Please note that this response, with your personal details removed, may be published on the Ministry of Health website.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "D Woodley". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "D".

Deborah Woodley
Deputy Director-General
Population Health and Prevention