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WAIKANAE HEALTH News

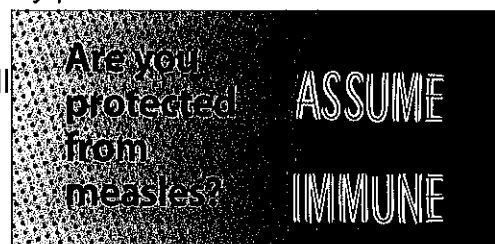
Waikanae Health Newsletter June 2016

## MEASLES ALERT

Regional Public Health advises there are now 17 confirmed cases of measles in the Levin/Horowhenua area, and two in the Wellington area. Immunisation is vital to prevent a spread of this very serious illness. If you were born after January 1969 and haven't had two doses of measles vaccine, or had measles, you are at risk of catching the disease.

Some basic facts about measles:

- Measles is highly contagious – and easily preventable.
- It affects both children and adults.
- **2 doses of the measles vaccine** is all you need to protect yourself, your family and your community.



- **Vaccination is particularly important if you are planning to travel anywhere overseas** – to protect yourself and to help prevent outbreaks in New Zealand.

#### **How is measles spread?**

Measles is a highly infectious virus that is spread easily from person to person through the air, via breathing, coughing and sneezing.

It affects both children and adults.

People with measles are infectious 5 days before and until 5 days after the rash appears. The illness usually starts 10-14 days after you have been exposed. If you have measles you'll get the following symptoms: a fever, a cough, a runny nose, sore and watery pink eyes and sometimes small white spots appear on the back inner cheek of your mouth.

At around day 3-7 a blotchy rash may appear which tends to start on the face before moving over your head and body. The rash can last for up to a week.

#### **Measles complications**

Measles can be life threatening: about 1 in 10 people with measles will need hospital treatment.

Measles can also lead to other complications, including:

- ear infections (which can cause permanent hearing loss)
- diarrhoea
- pneumonia
- seizures
- swelling of the brain – this is rare, but can cause permanent brain damage or death.

Up to 30% of people with measles will develop complications – usually children under five and adults over the age of 20.

Measles during pregnancy increases the risk of miscarriage, premature labour and low birth-weight babies.

#### **Call your family doctor or Healthline**

If you have any of these symptoms, see your family doctor or call Healthline on 0800 611 116 as soon as possible.

The best prevention against measles is the measles, mumps and rubella (MMR) vaccine. Vaccines are free for children and adults who have not previously received two doses of the vaccine. Vaccination is also important if

you are planning to travel anywhere overseas.

If you cannot easily find records it is appropriate to go ahead and vaccinate. There are NO safety concerns about giving too many MMR vaccines and it is a safer option than delaying by trying to track down lost records. If in doubt vaccinate! This will be free to you.

Please contact Waikanae Health if you would like to go ahead with the vaccination.

## **GOOD NEWS - FUNDING FOR WARFARIN MONITORING**

Warfarin is a life-preserving, but potentially fatal medication. When used correctly and under appropriate supervision it is safe and effective. Warfarin is used to keep blood thin and prevent clotting that could lead to stroke, heart attack and death. Warfarin has what is known as a "narrow therapeutic window", which means that the difference in dosage between effective dose and dangerous dose is very small. Therefore INR levels, reflecting the "thinness" of the blood, need to be measured regularly. This requires a doctor's decision on dosage on every review.

The past 10 years have seen a dramatic increase in the number of patients on Warfarin. This has been due in part to its wider use in certain conditions. Currently we help supervise over 200 patients who are on Warfarin for variable periods of time. This is a time consuming and exacting task. We are very pleased to be able to pass on some extra funding which has been allocated to us for more services under the Long Term Conditions programme. This means we are able to provide the Warfarin monitoring and dosing at no cost to the patient.

## **SPOT CHECK FRIDAY**

Concerned about a spot or mole? Not sure if you need something looked at?

Once a year we run a free Spot Check Clinic on a Saturday morning, where all-comers can have a mole or spot checked by a doctor, a diagnosis made and advice provided. These clinics are always very well attended, and we realise that once a year is not at all ideal in terms of waiting for something to be checked.

We have decided therefore to run a free Spot Check Clinic once a week, on a Friday

morning. A doctor will be available to check a spot or mole, diagnose and advise a treatment plan (if needed) and there will be no charge for this. Normal charges will then apply for any further appointments or treatments which may result from the diagnosis.

Appointments can be made for a place on this clinic by ringing us on 293 6005 and asking for an appointment on the next available Spot Check Clinic. The clinics will run out of the Specialist Centre end of the building.

## STAFFING NEWS

Our nursing team has had a couple of changes over recent months. Nurses Una and Zoe have left us for other adventures, and we now have Nurses Jo and Jenny who have recently joined the team. Both are very experienced Practice Nurses and are already making a great contribution.



## TRAVEL MEDICINE

Andrew Edwards completed the Diploma in Travel Medicine in 2014 after two years of study which included papers on Tropical Infectious Diseases, Wilderness Medicine and Travel Medicine. He has just completed a Research Methods paper and is considering a Masters in Travel Medicine.

Andrew's own travel experiences have included an overland trip from London to eastern Turkey, a medical expedition to Nepal via India, medical elective in Rwanda working in a rural mission hospital, 4 years working in Nepal in a community health programme, several visits to Thailand and trips back to East Africa including climbing Mt Meru in Tanzania in 2012. He returned to Nepal earlier this year for a Travel Medicine conference and was able to link up with some medical colleagues still working in health and development programmes in remote districts of Nepal. This work has been made even more challenging following the April 2015 earthquake.

If you are planning an overseas trip, particularly if it involves visiting developing countries, then a pre-travel consultation is important. The aim of this is to assess the risks of a trip and to manage those risks appropriately, whether they relate to vaccine-preventable diseases, insect-borne diseases, water and food-borne illnesses or safety and security. One of our nurses, Sara, has also completed the Certificate in Travel Medicine and is both experienced and well qualified to give advice. Waikanae Health is also now an authorised Yellow Fever vaccination centre so we can provide the full range of immunisations on site.

If you are planning some travel and need some advice go to our website [www.waikanaehealth.co.nz](http://www.waikanaehealth.co.nz). You will find there our Pre-Travel Questionnaire which you need to complete and email to us. We will contact you in response.

## SATELLITE CLINIC UPDATE

In early May the hearing for the appeal against KCDC consent for Resource Consent for a satellite medical centre at 41 Te Moana Road was held in the Environment Court. We are awaiting the Court's decision as to whether the consent will be upheld or declined.

## AND NOW FOR A JOKE:

Wife texts husband on a cold winter's morning:

"Windows frozen, won't open."

Husband texts back:

"Pour some hot water around the edges and then gently tap it with hammer."

Wife texts back 5 minutes later:

"Now we need a new computer."



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