31 January 2020

Measles alert for Mooloolaba Wharf precinct

Sunshine Coast Hospital and Health Service (SCHHS) is responding to a new notification of measles in an adult female, who spent time in the Mooloolaba Wharf precinct while she was infectious.

SCHHS Public Health Unit Director, Dr Virginia McLaughlin, said the woman was most likely exposed to measles in Asia, where she had been travelling, and there is known ongoing measles activity.

The woman was unknowingly infectious while visiting the Mooloolaba Wharf precinct on 23 January between 7pm and 9 pm.

“We urge anyone who was at this location during this time to ensure they are protected against measles and to seek medical advice if they develop symptoms,” Dr McLaughlin said.

Measles is one of the most infectious of all communicable diseases and can be acquired in public places if infectious people are present. Measles is spread by tiny droplets through coughing and sneezing.

The initial symptoms are fever, lethargy, runny nose, moist cough and sore and red eyes, followed a few days later by a blotchy red rash. The rash starts on the face then becomes widespread. Symptoms usually start around 10 days after infection but sometimes later.

“Anyone who was at this location during this time who develops measles-like symptoms up until 6 February should contact their General Practitioner (GP) for advice,” Dr McLaughlin said.

“It is very important to call the medical practice first to say you could have measles, so that staff have precautions in place when you arrive to avoid spreading the disease to others.

“This is a reminder that everyone should take the opportunity to make sure they are vaccinated against measles.”

“If you are planning overseas travel it is important to ensure that you are protected against measles before travelling.”

You are generally considered to be immune to measles if:

- You were born before 1966
- You have had two documented doses of a measles containing vaccine (such as MMR)
- You have measles immunity proven on blood testing
- You have had laboratory-confirmed measles disease.
Anyone who does not meet the above criteria is encouraged to talk to their GP regarding immunisation. The measles vaccine is provided free for any person born during or since 1966. Infants from the age of six months who are travelling are able to be vaccinated against measles.

"Measles can be very distressing for those affected and can be a severe illness even in otherwise healthy adolescents and young adults," Dr McLaughlin said.

Further information on measles is available on the Queensland Health website, at: http://www.health.qld.gov.au/ or by calling your GP or 13 HEALTH (13 43 25 84).

ENDS

Media contact: Alicia Temple | Alexia Kelly | 5202 0083 | 0408 713 747

Follow us! 📸 💬