

HealthNews

NELSON MARLBOROUGH HEALTH

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Measles is in our community

Are you and your whanau up to date with the MMR (Measles Mumps Rubella) vaccine?

Check with your GP to be sure. Measles starts with a fever and usually a cough or runny nose, and perhaps sore, red eyes before the rash appears. It's highly infectious to non-immune people. Nelson Marlborough Public Health Service recommends patients with any symptoms stay at home and call their GP, medical centre or Healthline (000 611 116) before going to a GP or medical centre waiting room and putting others at risk.

If you were born before 1969, have already had measles or have had two doses of the MMR vaccine, you are almost certainly immune to measles. But, if in doubt, check with your doctor.



Immunise against HPV and genital warts

HPV or human papilloma virus infection (commonly known as wart virus) is the most common sexually transmitted infection, a cause of cervical cancer. Around 70 per cent of sexually active men and women will get HPV and they may never know they have the virus. Most of the time, HPV goes away on its own. But sometimes it lingers and changes the cells on a woman's cervix.

The HPV vaccine protects against the types of HPV that cause 90 per cent of genital warts and 70 per cent of cervical cancers. Immunisation is highly recommended for both women and men and should be completed before becoming sexually active.

All girls in year 8 at participating schools are offered the free HPV vaccination. Pharmac has proposed extending the programme to include boys from next year. The vaccine is also available from doctors, health centres and some Family Planning clinics. For more information go to www.hpv.org.nz

Tap into Water

Water is free and the best drink for your body. That's the message behind our *Tap into Water* oral health initiative.

Nelson Marlborough Health's Public Health Service is working with schools, workplaces and sport and activity groups in the Top of the South to promote water as the best choice of drink.

"Water promotes health and wellbeing," says Principal Dental Officer Dr Rob Beaglehole.

"On the other hand, junk drinks like soft drinks, diet drinks and fruit juice can rot teeth and contribute to health problems such as obesity."

Check out the *Tap into Water* Facebook page: facebook.com/tapintowater



HPV Vaccine
(Human Papillomavirus Vaccine)
A vaccine to help prevent cancers caused by HPV infection

immunise
their best protection

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BOARD TALK



As we head into winter we need to check we have taken steps to protect ourselves and our whanau from the ills of winter. This year we are seeing a return of measles. This is daft. I make no apologies for being pro immunisation. Why would you take the risk of either catching or passing on such a debilitating disease? I've heard the arguments about freedom of choice and informed choice, but this is about community

responsibility. If you or your child gets measles, it's not just about you, it spreads! Please make sure your immunisations are up to date and have a happy, warm, illness-free winter.

Jenny Black

Jenny Black, Board Chair