

MEDIA RELEASE

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Remember mumps these school holidays

Dr Andrew Lindsay, Medical Officer of Health with the Nelson Marlborough Public Health Service, has issued a reminder to GPs and other healthcare professionals in the region to be alert to mumps.

While there are no current cases of mumps in the region, there were three cases in August and a mumps outbreak is ongoing in Auckland.

Dr Lindsay says that with school holiday-related travel involving people from, or locals returning from, other parts of New Zealand and overseas where mumps is present, it is possible that imported cases may appear in our district.

“Most of the cases of mumps we’ve had so far this year were imported from outside Nelson and Marlborough. Primary care and public health efforts have limited the spread of the disease and prevented it from gaining a foothold in the district – so far,” Dr Lindsay says.

He encourages young people to check that they are fully vaccinated against mumps, and for parents to check that their children are up to date.

“Immunisation remains the best way to prevent mumps. Adolescents aged 10-19 and 20-29 year olds are the most affected age groups in NZ at present.”

Know the symptoms

Mumps causes fever, headaches and pain in the jaw. Swelling may then develop in the glands in front of the ear and some males may experience swelling of their testes. Very young children infected with mumps may have no symptoms but they will still spread the disease if they have it.

If you suspect you have mumps, talk to your doctor or practice nurse

Mumps is very contagious. If you have any symptoms, contact your doctor or practice nurse for advice and limit your contact with other people. This means staying away from the workplace, early childhood centres, schools and other places where you may expose others to the virus.

Check your family’s vaccination status

Vaccination is the best protection against mumps. If you or your children have not had their recommended number of MMR (Measles Mumps and Rubella) vaccinations, it is strongly recommended that you get these up to date. Contact your doctor or practice nurse if you are unsure whether you or your family has been vaccinated, and book in vaccination if they haven’t.

Information about mumps

More information about mumps, how the disease spreads, and mumps vaccination is available online at:

<https://www.nmdhb.govt.nz/mumps/>

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