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(Te Whatu Ora – Health NZ, 2023a)

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# Measles

Part of the Communicable Disease Control Manual

This guidance supports public health professionals with the prevention and management of Measles cases, contacts and outbreaks.

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## Chapter last reviewed and updated in August 2023. The main sections updated were:

- Epidemiology
- Management of contacts (Definitions, Prophylaxis)

A description of changes can be found at [Updates to the Communicable Disease Control Manual](#).

## Epidemiology

### New Zealand epidemiology

In 2017, Aotearoa New Zealand was verified by the World Health Organization as having eliminated endemic measles. It has maintained elimination since then. This means that there has not been sustained transmission of measles for longer than a year in New Zealand since 2014. However, measles is often imported into New Zealand following international travel.

New Zealand has continued to experience outbreaks of measles in recent decades. In the 2019 outbreak, more than 2000 people were infected with measles. The majority of cases were in Auckland and Canterbury, and the virus spread across many other parts of New Zealand and into neighbouring Pacific countries. **More recently, New Zealand experienced more contained outbreaks in February and May 2023, with both located in Auckland.**

Reoccurring measles outbreaks are due to historically low immunisation rates and therefore insufficient levels of immunity across the population to prevent community transmission. Prevention of measles outbreaks relies on improving coverage with measles-mumps-rubella (MMR) vaccination.