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For the attention of:

- parents of children attending day-care centres
- parents of pupils attending primary, secondary and vocational schools
- employees of day-care centres, primary, secondary and vocational schools in the Canton of Bern

Bern, April 2014

Englische Übersetzung des Merkblattes über Masern für Kitas, Volksschulen, Mittelschulen und Berufsfachschulen

**Information Sheet on Measles  
for Day-care Centres, Primary, Secondary and Vocational Schools**



**Eradication of Measles by 2015:**

- **Get vaccinated against measles and don't miss out on anything;**
- **Anyone contracting measles has to stay at home for 4 days following the onset of skin rash;**
- **Non-vaccinated contact persons of a measles case (born in 1964 or later), who haven't had measles have to stay at home for up to 21 days.**

**What is Measles?**

Measles is a highly contagious infectious disease. The measles virus is spread from human to human through droplets transmission, occurring when coughing or sneezing. The first symptoms occur one to three weeks after the infection and include fever, a cold, coughing and red eyes, followed by the appearance of the red spots typical of measles. These red spots spread from the face across the entire body, accompanied by high fever. There are frequent complications such as otitis media (in 70 to 90 out of 1,000 cases), occasionally pneumonia (in 10 to 60 out of 1,000 cases) or encephalitis (in 2 to 20 out of 1,000 cases). Measles may even lead to permanent disability, and, in rare cases, death. **In adults, the disease is often more serious and results in complications more frequently.**

**When is Measles Infectious?**

Measles is infectious even prior to the appearance of the red spots. For this reason, non-immune children, adolescents and staff of an institution who were in contact with the measles case and haven't contracted the disease yet, have to be excluded from the institution as soon as possible, that is, before they themselves become infectious to others, and must stay at home.

## What Happens in the Event of a Case of Measles in a Day-care Centre, Primary, Secondary or Vocational School?

- In order to prevent measles from spreading and protect persons who haven't yet or can't be vaccinated (e.g. infants younger than 9 months and persons with a weakened immune system),
- infected persons are excluded from the institution for 4 days following the onset of the rash and have to stay at home;
  - **non-vaccinated persons born in 1964 or later<sup>1</sup>**, that have been in contact with an infected person are **excluded for a maximum of 21 days**, unless they are vaccinated within three days (72 hours) following the last contact with the infected person, or if they have already had measles. The persons excluded **must remain at home**.

The legal bases for these measures are found in Articles 11 and 16 of the Federal Law on Protection against Infectious Diseases in Humans (Epidemics Law dated 18 December 1970 and Article 21 of the Ordinance on the Enforcement of the Federal Law on Epidemics and Tuberculosis dated 22 May 1979).

## How Can You Protect Yourself Against Measles?

Vaccination is the only possible means of prevention or the only form of personal protection against measles, as applicable. The measles vaccine was introduced 30 years ago and has been used ever since. For full immunisation, children, adolescents and adults born in 1964 or later will only need two doses. If you or your child are not or incompletely vaccinated (i.e. with only one dose), an initial vaccination and/or additional vaccination with up to a total of **two doses** is recommended.

## What Can You Do Now?

Check your and your child's immunisation status (e.g. with the help of the risk check tool on [www.stopmasern.ch](http://www.stopmasern.ch)). Vaccines against measles will be listed under the following names in your vaccination certificate: Attenuvax, Moraten, Rimevax, Measles live vaccine, Eolarix, MoRuviraten, Triviraten, Biviraten, MMVax, Rimprix, MMR-II, MMRVaxPro, Pluserix, Priorix or Priorix Tetra. If necessary, have yourself or your child vaccinated or re-vaccinated. Vaccinations of all children and adults born in 1964 or later with any of the measles vaccines approved in Switzerland, administered before the end of 2015 are exempt from the insurance deductible. Anyone being vaccinated against measles, mumps and rubella will only have to pay the patient's contribution. The remaining costs will be covered by the health insurance.

## What Can You Do if You or Your Child Develop Measles Symptoms?

In the event of a suspected case of measles, consult your doctor. The infected child should not attend a day-care centre or school, or should remain at home, as applicable. Call your doctor and warn him/her that you are taking an infected person to their practice.

Should you or your child have contracted measles, you must immediately inform the head of the institution so that they can transmit this information to the Office of the Cantonal Medical Officer, which, in turn, will initiate the necessary measures.

For further information, please see [www.stopmasern.ch](http://www.stopmasern.ch).

Yours sincerely,

OFFICE OF THE CANTONAL  
MEDICAL OFFICER

Dr. med. Jan von Overbeck  
Cantonal Medical Officer

<sup>1</sup> Anyone born in 1963 or earlier is considered immune.