



Sharp & To the Point

MEASLES

Since 31 August 2003, there has been an outbreak of measles occurring in metropolitan Adelaide. In total, 21 cases have been reported in people aged 9 months to 36 years as shown in the graph below.

The first case was a 19 year-old female who had recently returned from New Zealand. The second case, a 22 year-old male, became infected after contact with the first case in the workplace. This case subsequently infected a 22 year-old male friend. Seven cases representing the third wave of transmission attended a live band venue on the same evening as the second case. To date, five distinct waves of transmission have been documented.

The Communicable Disease Control Branch is attempting to clarify the vaccination status of cases. However, several cases have reported no past history of measles vaccination or measles disease.

Cases have reported attending worksites, shopping centres, childcare centres, health care agencies and various social engagements during the infectious period. Moreover, some contacts have reported extensive use of public transport systems. The Communicable Disease Control Branch has provided measles health information to over 2,000 residents of metropolitan Adelaide. The graph demonstrates that 66% of the cases were aged between 20-39 years. Free MMR vaccine is available for people in this age group.

MMR vaccination is provided free as part of the immunisation schedule at 12 months and 4 years. It is also **free for persons born during or since 1966 that have not received a 2nd dose of measles containing vaccine, and who have not had measles disease.**

MMR vaccine should not be given to a person if:

- They are currently pregnant or plan to be pregnant within 28 days of vaccination
- They have had a severe, life-threatening reaction to previous measles, mumps, rubella (or MMR) vaccine.

Ref: Government of South Australia 'Measles disease: Information for the Public'

www.dhs.sa.gov.au/pehs/Immunisation/immunisation-topics-index.htm

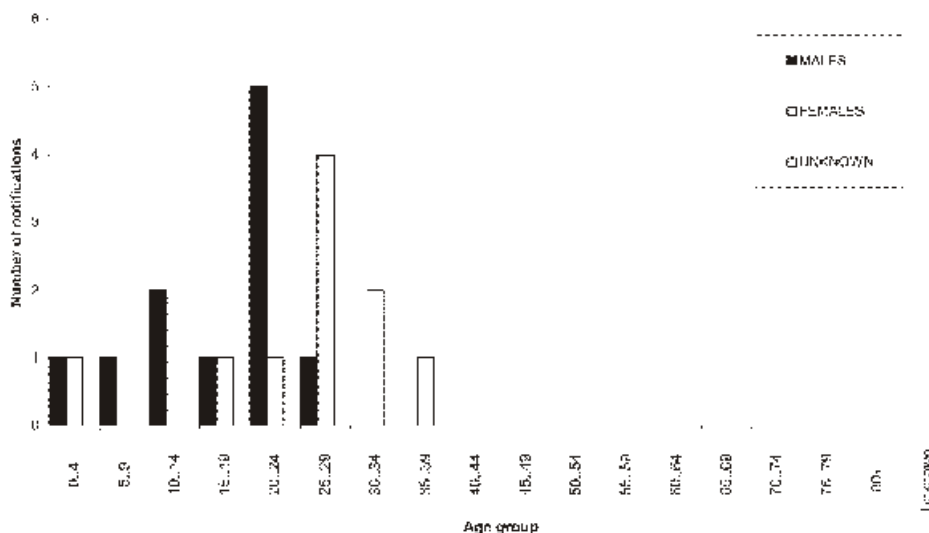
NEW PAMPHLET

The new pamphlet titled "*Are you of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander origin*" was launched on November 1st 2003 by Rosemary Wanganeen and Dr Michael Rice at the GP Education Day on Immunisation. Both speakers highlighted the importance of identifying people of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islanders descent. This pamphlet has been distributed by SAICU to all immunisation providers encouraging them to ask people whether they are of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent.

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Issue 3

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Measles in South Australia, August to November 2003, by age group and sex



STOP PRESS ~ IMMUNISATION POLICIES

Look out for the new 'South Australian Immunisation Policies' that support the SA Immunisation Program. SAICU is currently updating them for 2004 and will be distributing them in January with the updated fridge monitoring cards. These policies are an important guide for your immunisation practice informing you of access to vaccine for specific groups, vaccine order procedures and many other issues that are queried each year. Store them with your other immunisation information so that providers, practice staff and new employees can access the information throughout the year.



Q. Is the 4th dose of DTPa currently required for children aged 18 months?

A. On the 18th September 2003 the NHMRC endorsed the new recommendations for the 8th Edition of the Australian Immunisation Handbook. From this date DTPa is no longer required at 18 months, instead the 4th dose is recommended at 4 years of age.

Q. If a child aged 20 months has missed the 18 month dose of DTPa and presents to the clinic for catch up vaccinations, should this dose be caught up?

A. No, as the recommendation that the dose was no longer required was endorsed from the 18th September 2003.

Q. If a child missed the 4th dose of DTPa at 18 months but had a catch up of DTPa prior to 4 years of age; do you still need to give another dose?

A. Yes, if a child had a dose of DTPa prior to 4 years of age another dose of DTPa is required at 4 years ensuring minimal intervals between doses are observed. (eg 12 months)

Q. At 12 months of age 3 injections are required. Should one be delayed for another visit?

A. The NHMRC recommend that in those cases where 3 or more injections are required on the ASVS, they should be given at the one visit without unnecessary delay.

Q. What are the current recommendations for Poliomyelitis vaccinations?

A. OPV, IPV and IPV-containing vaccines are now recommended in the ASVS. Inactivated Poliomyelitis Vaccine (IPV) in **combination vaccines** is not currently available in Australia.

It is important prior to vaccinating to discuss the risks and benefits of the disease and the available vaccines. Information should be provided on both OPV and IPV:

- **OPV**, which is currently provided free in Australia, has these possible side effects: less than 1% of doses may result in fever, diarrhoea, headache or muscle pains; and one in 2.4 million doses may result in vaccine associated paralytic polio in the patient or a close contact of the patient (eg family member, friend).
- **IPV** is recommended by NHMRC as there are no proven serious side effects (however 1 in 10 children may experience inflammation at the injection site, discomfort or fever). IPV is available at a cost, however it involves an extra injection at 2, 4, 6 months and 4 years of age.

Ref: Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing, 'New Immunisation Schedule Fact Sheet for parents'

On the 18th September 2003 the new recommendations for the 8th Edition of the Australian Immunisation Handbook were endorsed by the National Health Medical Research Council. Some of the main changes include:

- The removal of the DTPa due at 18 months of age
- Introduction of A pertussis containing vaccine (dTpa) for adolescents in Year 9 via the 2004 school program
- Expansion of the funded infant pneumococcal program for specific groups.

The SA Immunisation Coordination Unit (SAICU) in collaboration with the Local Immunisation Coordinators of the Division of General Practice are conducting education sessions throughout SA on 'What's New in the 8th Edition Australian Immunisation Handbook'. These sessions will cover:

- Recommendations already endorsed by the NHMRC since 7th Edition
- Changes in the handbook
- Changes in recommendations and procedures
- New vaccines
- Australian Standard Vaccine Schedule (ASVS)
- National Immunisation Program
- Implications of changes
- Available resources

For further information about sessions please contact your Local Immunisation Coordinator in your Division of General Practice.

The new 8th Edition of the Australian Immunisation Handbook will be distributed by the Australian Government to all immunisation providers by December 2003.

Other resources such as the *Understanding Childhood Immunisation* Booklets and *Keep it Cool* are being updated. Web: <http://immunise.health.gov.au>
SAICU has developed a schedule for South Australia which clearly outlines the **Australian Standard Vaccination Schedule (ASVS)** (which includes the recommended funded and non funded vaccines) and the **National Immunisation Program (NIP)** (which only includes funded vaccines). This schedule was distributed to all immunisation providers in November 2003. To order more copies contact SAICU 82267177.

Michael Loder

Local Immunisation Coordinator ~ Riverland



Michael Loder was born on Kangaroo Island. Raised on KI and later at Wasleys, before moving to Woomera in 1962.

Convent educated, dragged up as number 3 in a family of 8, he saw more rocket launches during the 1960's than most see in reruns of Dr Who.

Originally trained as a welder, he eventually adopted nursing as a career in 1985 at The Queen Elizabeth Hospital. Alternating between Barmera, Hillcrest and Modbury Hospitals he acquired Psychiatric and Midwifery certificates. He later managed Aboriginal medical clinics in the Kimberlies and Arnhem Land.

Back in SA he reluctantly resumed Masters Studies while reacquainting with forensic and acute triage psychiatry.

A Local Immunisation Coordinator since 2000, he has created havoc and despair amongst peers with numerous promotional exploits.

He still owns a farm and pilots multi-engined aircraft in his spare time. Michael remains devilishly handsome and loved by all his family for his humility.

STOP PRESS ~ PREVENAR SDO

A Standing Drug Order for the 7 valent Pneumococcal conjugate vaccine - Prevenar (7vPCV) has now been completed and circulated to immunisation providers who administer vaccines supported by Standing Drug Orders. Please note there has been a couple of versions, the current version can be identified by table 1c which now lists **7-17 months** rather than 7-11 months. Phone SAICU for more information on 82267177.

• REMINDER •

Varicella (chicken pox) has been a notifiable disease in SA since 2002.

If a disease is vaccine-preventable, it is notifiable. Contact the Disease Surveillance Investigation Unit on 82267177 to make a notification. Alternatively, notification can be made by faxing a 'Report of Notifiable Disease or Related Death' form to CDCB on 82267187. Forms can be downloaded from www.dhs.sa.gov.au/pehs



SAICU (08) 8226-7177