

SA Measles Vaccination Program

The South Australian Government is funding MMR (measles-mumps-rubella) vaccine for eligible people who are unable to receive funded MMR vaccine as part of the [National Immunisation Program](#) (NIP).

Why the program has been introduced

Measles is a very serious and highly transmissible disease. In an unvaccinated or under-vaccinated population, a single contagious person can potentially infect up to 18 other people. With ongoing measles outbreaks overseas, there has been a recent increase of confirmed cases across Australia, most commonly in unvaccinated or under vaccinated individuals.

Eligibility

MMR vaccine is available for individuals in the following categories;

- adults born during or after 1966 who have not received two doses,
- children aged 6 to less than 12 months who are travelling overseas.

Providers administering the program should be satisfied that consumers requesting an MMR vaccine for a child aged 6 to less than 12 months are planning to travel internationally. Proof of planned travel is not required.

The requirement for eligible adults to be travelling overseas has now been removed.

Why are adults born during these years eligible for MMR vaccine dose?

Adults born in Australia between 1966 and 1989 are likely to have received only one dose of MMR vaccine and are recommended to receive an additional dose. Most people born in Australia prior to 1966 are likely to have natural immunity to measles through exposure to the disease.

Excluding those likely to be immune, current recommendations are that two doses of a measles-containing vaccine are required to maximise immune response and minimise spread of measles. The recommendation for two doses of a measles containing vaccine was not introduced on to the National Immunisation Program until the 1990s.

Why are children aged from 6 months to less than 12 months of age eligible for MMR vaccine dose?

Measles-containing vaccines are not routinely recommended for infants less than 12 months of age due to maternal antibodies to measles persisting in many infants after birth, declining progressively over the first year of life (Australian Immunisation Handbook). However, infants travelling overseas are at higher risk of severe measles disease and are recommended to receive MMR vaccine from 6 months of age at the earliest.

Infants who receive MMR vaccine between 6 and 12 months of age because they have travelled overseas still need to receive the two recommended measles containing vaccine doses scheduled at 12 and 18 months of age, noting minimum intervals must still be observed.

Who should not have MMR vaccine?

The MMR vaccine is contraindicated for individuals who:

- > are immunocompromised as a result of a medical condition or immunosuppressive therapy
- > are less than 6 months of age
- > had a severe allergic reaction (anaphylaxis) to a previous dose or an ingredient in the vaccine
- > are pregnant (pregnancy should also be avoided for 28 days after vaccination)
- > had a live vaccine (chickenpox, BCG, or yellow fever) in the past 4 weeks

Refer to the [Australian Immunisation Handbook- measles chapter](#) for further information on contraindications and precautions for measles containing vaccines.

Who can order and administer MMR vaccine for the SA program

All immunisation providers registered with the Vaccine Distribution Centre (VDC) are able to order and administer MMR as part of this program.

Please monitor the VDC Noticeboard and VDC email correspondence.

PLEASE NOTE: This vaccine will be categorised on the VDC ordering system as State Funded.

NIP vaccine stock is only available for children aged 12 months (MMR) and 18 months (MMRV) as per the NIP schedule, people less than 20 years requiring catch-up doses, refugees and humanitarian entrants of any age.

Fact sheet for health professionals

Reminders

> Report to the AIR

All doses of MMR administered as part of the SA Funded Measles Vaccination Program should be reported to the Australian Immunisation Register. All vaccines administered as part of a state funded program should be recorded under the “other” category, not ‘NIP’.

> Report AEFI

Please report serious or unexpected adverse events following immunisation (AEFI) to SA Health through the online [South Australian Vaccine Safety Surveillance System](#) reporting system.

Further information

- > [Australian Immunisation Handbook- measles chapter](#)
- > [National Centre for Immunisation Research and Surveillance- measles vaccines for Australian Fact Sheet](#)
- > [Australian Government Department of Health and Aged Care- measles vaccine](#)
- > [Health Care Worker immunisation and screening requirements](#)

Immunisation Section

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