

New Zealand has had 361 cases of Mumps reported so far this year. This is more cases than we have had in New Zealand in the last 16 years! Unfortunately, not all countries have the same vaccination schedule. There may be people who don't realise they are not protected. Anyone who was vaccinated in another country needs to check with their GP or Public Health Nurse. Some countries (like Tonga, Fiji, Kiribati and Tuvalu) vaccinate with MR, which is Measles and Rubella, but not Mumps. It's easy to get protected against Mumps, all GPs have the MMR vaccine, and it is free (and easier than having Mumps). Even with our New Zealand schedule, there are large numbers of young people not protected, due to an (unfounded) scare around the MMR vaccine in the late 1990s. Mumps causes high temperatures and very painful swelling around the jaw. It can also lead to infertility. It is spread through saliva (coughing, sneezing, sharing food and drink). If concerned, call your GP, Public Health Nurse, or Healthline on 0800 611 116.