

1.2 Measles

Summary

Number of cases, 2008: 55
 Number of confirmed cases, 2008 :13
 Crude incidence rate, 2008: 1.3/100,000
 Crude confirmed incidence rate, 2008: 0.3/100,000

In 2008, there were 55 measles cases (1.3/100,000) notified in Ireland. This is similar to 2007 when 53 cases were notified.

Forty-two cases (76%) in 2008 were classified as possible while 13 (24%) were classified as confirmed, giving a crude confirmed incidence rate of 0.3 per 100,000 population. Ten of the confirmed cases were laboratory confirmed while three were epidemiologically linked to a laboratory confirmed case. In 2007, 20 (38%) of the 53 measles cases notified were classified as confirmed.

In 2008, measles cases ranged in age from three months to 41 years. The largest number of cases (n=27) and the highest age specific incidence rate (22.3/100,000) were in the age group one to two years (figures 1 and 2). Of the 55 measles cases 30 (55%) were female and 25 (45%) were male.

Laboratory results were provided for 22 (40%) cases in 2008. Ten cases were laboratory positive for measles. Twelve cases were laboratory negative for measles, however, for six of these the oral fluid specimens were not taken at the optimal time following disease onset or the date of specimen collection in relation to disease onset was unknown (the optimal time for collecting oral fluid specimens for measles IgM testing is greater than seven days to two months following disease onset). All cases that were laboratory negative for measles were classified as possible cases.

Measles vaccine in Ireland is available as part of the combined measles-mumps-rubella (MMR) vaccine. In Ireland, vaccination with the first dose of MMR is routinely recommended at twelve months of age and the second dose at four to five years of age.

Vaccination data were reported for 46 (84%) measles cases in 2008. Thirty-one cases (n=31/46, 67%) were unvaccinated; seven (n=7/31, 23%) of these were less than 12 months of age.

Thirteen cases (n=13/46, 28%) had one dose of MMR vaccine; twelve (92%) of these were less than six years of age. Only two (15%) of these 13 cases were classified as confirmed.

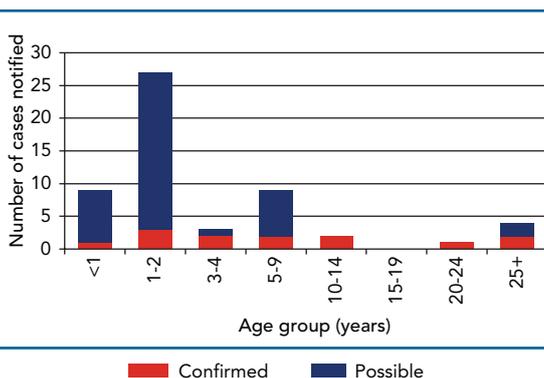


Figure 1. Number of notified measles cases in 2008 by age group and case classification

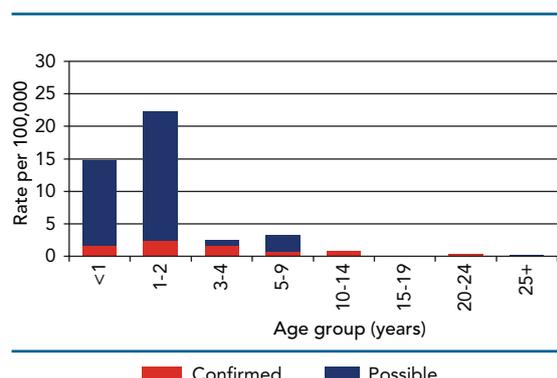


Figure 2. The age specific incidence rates (per 100,000) of notified measles cases in 2008 by case classification

Two cases (n=2/46, 4%) were reported as having received two doses of MMR. Only one of these cases was classified as a confirmed case; this case was reported to have an underlying illness.

Seven cases were hospitalised representing 17 percent (n=7/42) of all cases with known hospitalisation status. The seven cases ranged in age from nine months to 11 years with four cases classified as confirmed and three classified as possible. One case was hospitalised for one day, one was hospitalised for three days while the number of days hospitalised was not reported for the remainder. Of the seven hospitalised cases, three were unvaccinated and three were reported to have one dose of MMR. The remaining hospitalised case had two doses of MMR; this case was reported to have an underlying illness.

Information on measles associated complications was reported for 32 cases. One case, aged 11 months, was reported to have pneumonia while one case, aged 17 months, had otitis media. The remaining 30 cases had no complications.

Four cases were reported as being infected outside Ireland. The country of infection for two confirmed cases was reported as India and the countries of infection for two possible cases were reported as Poland (n=1) and the United Kingdom (n=1).

Two localised measles outbreaks were notified during 2008, with a total of six cases attributed to these outbreaks. Both outbreaks were in private houses.

The figures presented in this summary are based on data extracted from the Computerised Infectious Disease Reporting (CIDR) system on 11th August 2009. These figures may differ slightly from those published previously due to ongoing updating of notification data on CIDR.

EU data are available at www.euvac.net and WHO European data are available at <http://data.euro.who.int/CISID/>.