



## Emerging and Reemerging Infectious Diseases, Region of the Americas

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### **Measles imported cases in Santa Catarina, Brazil**

During epidemiological week (EW) 51 (14th-20th December, 2003), Brazil's Health Surveillance Secretariat (Secretaria de Vigilância em Saúde, SVS) reported two cases of measles from Blumenau, Santa Catarina. Both were detected through periodic visits during active search for measles cases as a part of active surveillance.

The first case, reported on 21 November, is a 35 year old man classified as a probable case because he had no history of previous vaccination and had traveled to Europe 5 days before the onset of symptoms. The second case, a relative of the first case, was classified as suspected case because he had been vaccinated some days before the onset of the disease. Specimens from both cases were serologically tested and had positive results for measles virus. New samples are being processed in the National Reference Laboratory (Oswaldo Cruz Foundation, Fiocruz). Other members of the family had negative results. Neither the hospital nor the laboratory has reported new cases to the municipal health secretariat.

Active case search was carried out involving the hospital, the laboratory, and primary care centers near the neighborhood of the suspected cases, and no additional suspected cases were detected. Vaccination status was studied among relatives, health care providers, laboratory personnel involved in the event and the index case's work-mates. Measles vaccine was administered when necessary. Measles vaccination coverage in cohorts of children under 5 years old was investigated in the surrounding neighborhoods, and coverage > 95% was found in all of them, except in Vila Feliz (91.6%). Educational messages have been spread among health care providers, health units and hospitals in this municipality and the region, as well as in the airports. The Health Secretariat of the State and of Santa Catarina have organized health teams to maintain the alert during the summer.

Up to the EW 50 (7th-13th December, 2003) 102 confirmed measles cases had been reported in the Region. Canada reported 14 imported cases, Chile 1 imported case in the EW 47, Costa Rica 1 imported case in the EW 47, Brazil 2 imported cases, and 41

cases in USA (11 of them imported). In Mexico 43 confirmed cases had been reported until EW 50 (last reported case in EW 47).

Brazil had not reported any measles circulation since 2001. The current situation demonstrates the constant threat of importation of measles cases in the Region, and the need for countries to maintain strong active surveillance to rapidly detect importations and take appropriate control measures. It is particularly important to ensure that specimens are taken in a timely manner from suspected cases to ensure rapid identification and classification of cases.

#### *Sources*

- [Technical note, 19 December 2003](#). Ministry of Health of Brazil.
- [Measles Weekly Bulletin](#), Vol. 9, No. 50. Panamerican Health Organization, 2003