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Queensland health officials fear measles outbreak

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Singapore: With rising measles cases in Queensland, Australian health authorities fear a severe outbreak, as 41 cases have been reported so far in the country. The health officials said that lack of adequate vaccination and increase in the number of migrants would have been the major cause for the outbreak.

Health experts said that as per the trend, in the past five years only 12 cases have been reported in the first half of the year. However, this year had witnessed a rise of around 30 cases for the same period.

The senior director of the Queensland Health Communicable Disease Unit, Dr Sonya Bennett said that though travel could contribute to half of the cases, rest of them were acquired locally and this indicated concern as the virus would have spread in the community.

Dr Heidi Carroll, Queensland Health senior medical officer said that vaccination was the only defense and many members of Australia failed to take the second dose of vaccination for mumps, measles and rubella which could be the major cause of soaring number of cases.

Dr Caroll cautioned that measles was one of the most contagious disease and can affect even healthy young adults. She expressed concern over a large part of the community still not being vaccinated and advised people to check their vaccination status.

The health ministry of Australia urged its citizens to get duly vaccinated before planning their overseas trip, as a major measure to curb the spread in the community.