

ABSTRACT

Measles Situation in Belize

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Measles remains endemic in most Caribbean countries. Of the vaccine preventable diseases, measles is the most important cause of childhood mortality and morbidity in developing countries. Therefore, we need to plan for the elimination of measles in our Caribbean countries and in this way help with the global eradication effort.

This study focuses on the measles situation in Altamira, a village of a district with the lowest immunization coverage in Belize. This provided data on: the number of reported and unreported cases of measles, the immunization coverage in children 0-15 years (50%) prior to measles infection, the actual immunization coverage in children 0-5 years (90%) and the knowledge, beliefs and practices of mothers and guardians with regards to caring for a child with measles.

There are two major factors to be considered in the situation of measles in Belize, under-reporting of measles and the potency of the measles vaccine.