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<th>Influence of vaccination dose and catch-up campaign on antibody titers against measles and rubella among university students</th>
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<td>Author(s)</td>
<td>Takeuchi, Jiro</td>
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<tr>
<td>Citation</td>
<td>Kyoto University (京都大学)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Issue Date</td>
<td>2014-03-24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>URL</td>
<td><a href="http://dx.doi.org/10.14989/doctor.k18173">http://dx.doi.org/10.14989/doctor.k18173</a></td>
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<td>学位規則第1条第2項により要約公開</td>
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Serological assessment of measles-rubella vaccination catch-up campaign among university students

Running title: Serology of catch-up vaccination

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Number of text pages: 11
Number of reference pages: 5
Number of Tables: 3
Abstract

**Background:** In Japan, 5000-300,000 persons succumbed to measles every year until 2001. Measles/rubella-combined (MR) vaccination at age 17-18 years (phase 4 MR vaccination: MR-IV) was launched in 2008 in Japan as a measles-rubella catch-up campaign. A serological assessment of this campaign has not been thoroughly performed.

**Methods:** Titers of anti-measles and anti-rubella immunoglobulin G antibodies, and past medical history including measles and rubella vaccination and infection were obtained from first-year university students in 2008 and 2009, and the immune status against measles and rubella was compared between students at the target MR-IV age (the target age group) and those a year older than the target age (non-target age group).

**Results:** 186 students were in the target age group and 146 were in the non-target age group. The proportion of students with a history of measles and rubella infection was not significantly different between the 2 groups (8.8% vs. 6.3%, \( P = 0.41 \) and 11.0% vs. 9.9%, \( P = 0.75 \), respectively). A history of two or more measles and rubella vaccinations was significantly more frequent in the target age group (85.2% and 54.9%, respectively) than in the non-target age group (20.8% and 13.2%, respectively) (both \( P < 0.001 \)). Proportions of seropositives for measles and rubella were also greater in the target age group (98.9% and 97.8%, respectively) than in the non-target age group (91.0% and 87.5%, respectively) (both \( P < 0.001 \)).

**Conclusions:** The MR-IV catch-up campaign helped achieve herd immunity and will contribute to the elimination of measles and rubella.
Key words: antibody, catch-up campaign, Maternal and Child Health Handbook, measles-rubella vaccination, university students.