

Protecting yourself against MUMPS



There has been a recent increase in mumps cases among students in Manchester. Please read this information on how to protect yourself.

Why are you at increased risk?

Over the last few years there has been a large outbreak of mumps affecting young adults across the UK. This outbreak particularly affected colleges and universities where transmission has been rapid because of greater social mixing.

Those most at risk of mumps are people born between 1983 and 1990. This group might have had single measles vaccine or MR vaccine in school but neither of these contains any protection against mumps. Some might even have had a dose of MMR vaccine, but one dose is not always enough – two doses of MMR are necessary for full protection against mumps. Those born after 1990 are likely to have received at least one dose of MMR vaccine.

What is mumps?

Mumps is an infection caused by a virus. It usually starts with fever and headache for a day or two. In most cases this is followed by swelling and soreness of the glands between the ear and the jaw.

Mumps virus can also cause other problems. Men can get swollen; painful testicles (orchitis), and women can get swollen, painful ovaries (oophoritis). Ear infections, swelling of the pancreas and meningitis can also happen. Mumps infection is usually a more severe infection in adults than in young children.

The time from becoming infected to becoming unwell is around 14-21 days. People with mumps are most infectious just before they become unwell and for 5-10 days after.

How can you protect yourself?

All students coming to University should make sure they have had 2 doses of MMR vaccine. If you have not had 2 doses of MMR, please see your GP as soon as possible. Please tell the doctor or nurse if you think you may be pregnant or if you are planning a pregnancy as MMR vaccine is not recommended in pregnancy. You should not be charged for this vaccine as in most places in the UK arrangements are in place to reimburse GPs.

What should you do if you think you might have mumps?

Do not go into University but phone your GP or student occupational health service for advice.

Where can I get more information about mumps?

Further information on mumps is available here;
<http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/mumps/pages/introduction.aspx>