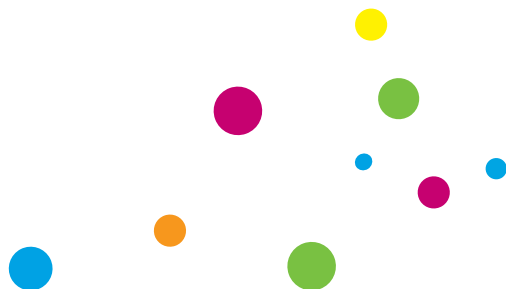


Why should I check whether I have had two MMR vaccines now?

There have recently been outbreaks of mumps in young people in Lothian who have not been vaccinated with MMR. Although most people fully recover, mumps can still cause you to feel miserable, and you may have to miss work or study for a number of weeks until you have recovered.

Although there are very few cases of measles and rubella in Scotland each year, these viruses are still circulating in the UK and there are outbreaks in other parts of the world.

It is important to be fully protected against these viruses, not only to protect yourself but also to stop you potentially passing these infections on to other people with weaker immune systems.



How should I check if I have had the MMR vaccine?

If you are unsure whether you have completed two full doses and are fully protected, you should contact your GP practice. They can check your health records to find out which vaccines you have had.

If you have not had two MMRs then you can get the MMR vaccine FREE in Lothian. Just phone your GP practice to ask them to assess whether you need to be vaccinated.

Further information can be found at:

NHS Health Scotland

<http://www.healthscotland.com/topics/health/immunisation/index.aspx>

NHS Choices information

www.nhs.uk/conditions/mmr

Health Protection Scotland

www.hps.scot.nhs.uk

Health Protection Agency

www.hpa.org.uk

If you have further questions, please contact your GP.



Measles, Mumps and Rubella

It's never too late to be vaccinated against measles, mumps and rubella



This leaflet has information on measles, mumps and rubella (MMR) and why it is important to be vaccinated against them.

It will also tell you where you can get the **MMR vaccine for FREE** if you need to be vaccinated.

You must have two MMR vaccines to be fully protected against measles, mumps and rubella.



The infections

Measles

Measles is a highly infectious viral illness. Symptoms include rash, fever, cough, runny nose and conjunctivitis.

You can catch measles by breathing in the droplets produced when people cough and sneeze.

Possible complications of measles infection include pneumonia, ear infections and eye infections. More serious complications, such as inflammation of the brain (encephalitis), are rarer but can be fatal. There are hundreds of thousands of deaths worldwide from measles every year.

Catching measles during pregnancy may result in miscarriage, stillbirth or pre-term (early) delivery.

Mumps

Mumps is an acute viral illness. Symptoms include fever, headache and painful swollen glands. Mumps is spread from person to person by coughs and sneezes. It can also be transmitted by direct contact through saliva (e.g. kissing).

Mumps can cause viral meningitis and permanent deafness. Much rarer but very painful complications of mumps are inflammation of the pancreas and of the ovaries and testicles.

Rubella

Rubella (German measles) is a mild disease caused by the rubella virus. Symptoms include fever and a distinctive red/pink rash.

The rubella virus is passed on through droplets in the air from coughs and sneezes. Rubella is about as infectious as flu.

Although rubella is a mild disease, if caught by pregnant women it can cause serious harm to the unborn baby. This is called congenital rubella syndrome. In the first three months of pregnancy this can cause eye problems, deafness, heart abnormalities and brain damage in the unborn baby.

The measles, mumps and rubella (MMR) vaccine

The only way to prevent you from catching these infections is to be vaccinated against them. The vaccine currently used in the United Kingdom to protect against all three infections is called the MMR.

The MMR vaccine was introduced in the UK in 1988 for all babies over one year of age. The second dose, given at 3-5 years of age, was introduced in 1996.

This means that there are large numbers of people in their late teens and twenties who have not been vaccinated with MMR or have only had one dose.

You need two MMR's to be fully protected.

Even if you have had single vaccines against measles and rubella in the past, or think you have had one of these infections, it is still important to check that you have had two MMR's, as this vaccine will also protect you against the mumps virus.

