

Measles update: getting children vaccinated.

The UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) has announced a national incident following the continued rise in Measles cases. Laboratory identified cases are particularly high in London and the West Midlands with cases highest in children under 10. The cases are related to low take-up of the MMR vaccine.

The NHS state that Measles is highly contagious and can lead to complications such as ear infections, pneumonia, and inflammation of the brain which require hospitalisation and on rare occasions can lead to long term disability or death. Spending 15 minutes or more in direct contact with someone infected with measles is enough to catch the infection. People whose immunity is compromised, pregnant women and unvaccinated children are at increased risk.

Measles symptoms to be aware of include:

- high fever
- sore, red, watery eyes
- coughing
- aching and feeling generally unwell
- a blotchy red brown rash, which usually appears after the initial symptoms.

Did you know that if your child is identified as a close contact to a measles case and they do not have satisfactory vaccination status they may be asked to self-isolate for up to 21 days. This could mean not attending school or childcare for up to 21 days.

Children who are fully vaccinated do not need to be excluded from school or childcare.

The UKHSA state that anyone with symptoms that could be measles are advised to stay at home and phone their GP or NHS 111 for advice, rather than visiting the surgery or A&E. This is because measles spreads very quickly and easily and so it is important to try and prevent the illness spreading further.

We have been advised by the UKHSA that you can check if your child is up to date with their MMR vaccinations by looking at their personal health record (Red Book) or by asking your GP.

For more information about measles please check here:

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/measles/>

For more information about the MMR vaccination please check here:

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/vaccinations/mmr-vaccine/>