



Protect yourself for a healthy and safe summer Information for students

Meningitis W

Meningitis is an infection of the protective membranes that surround the brain and spinal cord (meninges). Meningitis can affect anyone, but is most common in babies, young children, teenagers and young adults.

Older teenagers and young adults are at increased risk of infection from meningitis and septicaemia (blood poisoning), especially when starting university. This is because they will mix closely with lots of new people, some of whom may unknowingly carry the meningococcal bacteria at the back of their noses and throats.

Meningococcal bacteria may cause serious diseases and can kill, especially if not diagnosed early. Since 2009 there has been a large increase in group W meningococcal (MenW) disease in England, and there is no sign of the numbers declining.

Measles

Measles is highly infectious and spreads easily in those who are not immune, particularly in households and at social gatherings, such as festivals. Measles is a viral infection that can be very unpleasant and may sometimes lead to serious complications, particularly in infants, pregnant women and those with weakened immune systems.

There are currently significant outbreaks of measles in children and adults across Europe and we continue to see sporadic cases across London

You can help to protect yourself from these infections by getting vaccinated

The MenACWY vaccine protects against several forms of meningococcal disease, including MenW infection. Year 13 school leavers (teenagers born between 01/09/1998 – 31/8/1999) are eligible for this vaccination at their GP surgery.

If you have not received your MenACWY vaccine we recommend you speak to your GP. Please note that although eligible students may have had a MenC vaccination before, they should still have their free MenACWY vaccine as this gives the extra protection needed.

There is more information about MenACWY online at NHS Choices:
<http://www.nhs.uk/Conditions/vaccinations/Pages/men-acwy-vaccine.aspx>

The measles, mumps and rubella vaccination (MMR) is a safe and effective vaccination and will offer protection against both measles and mumps infection. A two dose course is



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recommended. There is no upper age limit for receiving the vaccine. If you have not had 2 doses of MMR vaccine we recommend you visit your GP surgery.

There is more information about MenACWY online at NHS Choices:
<http://www.nhs.uk/Conditions/vaccinations/Pages/mmr-vaccine.aspx>

If you are going travelling please be aware that there are country specific risks for infectious diseases. Detailed travel health advice is available online from the National Travel Health Network and Centre: <https://travelhealthpro.org.uk/>