

The number of cases of measles is rising across the United Kingdom and Europe, including Northern Ireland.

To be protected you need to be immunised with MMR vaccine.

Remember, it is never too late to get protected against measles, and you'll also be protecting yourself against two other diseases – mumps and rubella – that can be particularly serious in adults.



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For more information contact your local GP surgery or visit: www.nhs.uk/mmr

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MEASLES
Protect yourself, protect others

MMR vaccination
It's not just for children



- A number of people have recently had measles in Northern Ireland. In the past, high levels of immunisation uptake have provided protection, but unimmunised people are at risk and can catch and spread measles.
- Measles is caused by a very infectious virus giving a rash and high fever. It can also be very serious. Adults are likely to be more ill than children and for longer. Someone with measles usually has to spend about five days in bed and be off school or work for ten days. Adults are also more susceptible to complications.
- Complications of measles can include ear and chest infections, fits, diarrhoea, encephalitis (infection of the brain), and brain damage. About 1 in 2,500 to 1 in 5,000 individuals with measles is likely to die.
- Measles is highly infectious – a cough or a sneeze can spread the measles virus over a wide area. If you come into contact with it and are not protected, the chances are that you will be infected.
- You are at greatest risk if you have not been immunised with two doses of MMR vaccine.
- If you have missed one or both of your MMR vaccinations contact your GP surgery to arrange an appointment.
- By getting immunised you will not only be protecting yourself but also those people, especially children, who cannot have MMR because they are too young or they have illnesses such as leukaemia. They are protected if enough of the population is vaccinated so measles is eliminated.
- Outbreaks of measles are taking place across Europe, so make sure you and your family are protected with MMR before you travel.
- If you can't remember if you've had both MMR vaccinations, you can check with your GP, but having an extra dose poses no health risk. If you need two doses, they should ideally be given one month apart.
- The MMR vaccine may cause side effects for up to two weeks after the immunisation. The symptoms are similar to those caused by the diseases but are extremely mild and harmless and are not contagious. Speak to your nurse or doctor if you are at all concerned. If you are having treatment for a serious condition such as a transplant or cancer, or you have a condition that affects your immune system such as HIV get advice from your nurse or doctor .
- If you care for other people or young children as part of your work, it's particularly important that you are fully immunised with MMR. Passing on measles to children who are too young to have MMR vaccine or to someone who is already ill, can have very serious consequences for their health.

