

INFORMATION SHEETS

VACCINATION AGAINST Mumps, Measles & Rubella

- **Should staff with direct patient care be immunised against mumps, measles and rubella?**

While healthcare workers may need MMR vaccination for their own benefit, they should also be immune to measles, mumps and rubella in order to assist in protecting patients. This has been recommended by the Department of Health for the protection of staff and patients. All staff involved in direct patient care should be up to date with their routine immunisations, e.g. tetanus, diphtheria, polio and MMR.

- **What is satisfactory evidence of MMR immunity?**

Satisfactory evidence of protection would include documentation of having received two doses of MMR or having had positive antibody tests for measles, mumps and rubella.

- **Can I have MMR if I have had mumps, measles or rubella in the past?**

MMR vaccine can be given irrespective of a history of measles, mumps or rubella infection. There are no ill effects from immunizing such individuals. Pre-existing immunity inhibits replication of the vaccine viruses.

- **Why do you offer some staff blood tests to check for immunity and vaccinate other staff?**

Individuals who were born between 1980 and 1990 may not be protected against mumps but are likely to be vaccinated against measles and rubella. They should be recalled and given MMR vaccine. If this is their first dose, a further dose of MMR should be given from one month later.

Individuals born between 1970 and 1979 may have been vaccinated against measles and many will have been exposed to mumps and rubella during childhood. However, this age group should be offered MMR.

Individuals born before 1970 are likely to have had all three natural infections and are less likely to be susceptible. A blood test will confirm immunity. MMR vaccine should be offered to such individuals if they are susceptible to at least one of the infections.

- **What vaccine is offered?**

Priorix® is used by the OHD, RUH. Which is combined vaccine containing measles, mumps and rubella (German measles) viruses that have been weakened so that they are not able to cause measles, mumps or rubella in healthy people. Also, these types of viruses cannot be passed from the person who has had the vaccine to other people.

When a person is given the vaccine, the immune system (the body's natural defenses) will make antibodies against the measles, mumps and rubella viruses. These antibodies protect against measles, mumps and rubella infections.

As with all vaccines, Priorix® may not completely protect all people who are vaccinated against the infections it is intended to prevent. 2 vaccines are required

- **How often will I need to be vaccinated?**

2 MMR vaccines are recommended for maximum cover. Once you have had 2 vaccines no further vaccination or testing is required. If you are likely to be changing jobs then you should request a printout showing that you have had the vaccines and keep it in your portfolio.

- **Priorix is not suitable for everyone. If you have any of the following you will be referred to your GP for further advice?**


- Any febrile illness, or other active or suspected infection.
- Definite history of severe local or general reaction to a previous dose of MMR.
- Immunosuppression, those receiving radiotherapy or with untreated malignant disease or tuberculosis
- Not within 3 months of stopping high dose systemic corticosteroids or 6 months of stopping chemotherapy or generalised radiotherapy (at least 12 months after discontinuing immunosuppressants following bone-marrow transplantation)
- Impaired immune response caused by disease or treatment.
- Allergy to gelatin or neomycin
- Not within 4 weeks of another live vaccine unless given on the same day
- Not within 1 month of preceding MMR vaccine
- Not within 3 months of immunoglobulin injection or blood transfusion
- Pregnancy should be excluded at the time of immunisation and avoided for 1 month afterwards.
- Breast feeding
- Idiopathic Thrombocytopenic Purpura

- **Does the vaccine have side effects?**

Like all medicines, including all vaccines, Priorix® can have side effects.

The commonest other side effects (in more than one in a hundred but less than one in ten persons) after having Priorix® are reactions at the site of the injection. These include local redness, local pain and swelling. Rash and fever may also occur commonly.

Other uncommon side effects (in less than one in a hundred but more than one in a thousand persons) include: swollen glands in the cheek, swollen glands elsewhere in the body, nervousness,



sore throat, runny nose, coughing, vomiting, diarrhoea, chest infections, ear infections and other viral infections.

Severe allergic reactions can occur very rarely (in less than one in ten thousand persons) and usually happen very soon after the injection. These can involve difficulty breathing, tightness in the throat, rapidly spreading rashes, dizziness, loss of consciousness because of very low blood pressure, and a very fast heart beat. These severe reactions need urgent medical help.

Therefore, the person who has received Priorix® may be asked to stay in the vaccination area for a short time after the vaccine has been given to check that an immediate allergic reaction does not occur.

Tell your doctor immediately if you experience any of the following:

- Purple skin spots, unexplained bruises or prolonged bleeding from cuts (this is caused by a drop in the number of platelets, blood particles which help stop bleeding)
- A widespread skin rash that have blistering
- A severe headache with a stiff neck.

These events are also very rare (less than one in ten thousand persons).

Very rarely (in less than one in ten thousand persons) there can be inflammation of some nerves, possibly with pins and needles or loss of feeling or normal movement.

- **Will you let me know what my blood results are?**

Your blood tests and vaccination record will be retained by Occupational Health. You can request a copy of this record. Occupational Health will inform you if you require vaccination against mumps, measles and rubella.

- **References**

<https://www.medicines.org.uk/emc/>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/immunisation-against-infectious-disease-the-green-book>