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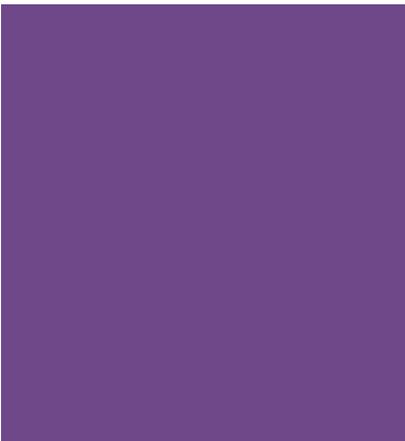
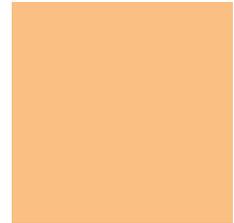
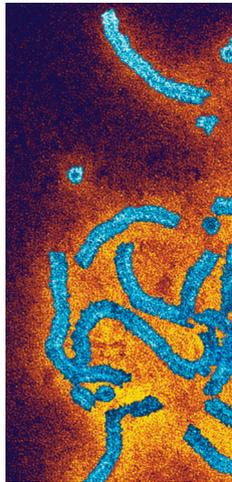
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September 2011
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**This publication is also
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Immunisation advice for new students



Measles, mumps and meningitis are serious infectious illnesses that spread easily when groups of people are gathered together such as at university or colleges. There have been outbreaks of all three infections over recent years.

It's important you are fully protected before you start your studies. Immunisation with the MMR vaccine protects you against measles, rubella and mumps. Men C vaccine reduces your risk of developing some forms of meningitis. Early treatment of meningitis is essential to save lives, so watch out for symptoms.

What are measles, mumps and rubella?

Measles is a very infectious virus that causes fever, cough and a rash. It can spread easily and cause serious complications such as pneumonia and encephalitis (swelling of the brain). It lasts for several days and even if there are no serious complications it is debilitating and unpleasant.

Mumps causes fever and painful, swollen glands in the face and neck. Mumps is spread in the same way as measles and can cause a mild form of meningitis, and in men it can cause orchitis (swollen and painful testicles).

Rubella (German measles) causes a rash and fever, and is usually a very mild illness. If caught in pregnancy it can cause serious damage to an unborn child.

How to protect yourself from measles, mumps and rubella

To be fully protected by the MMR vaccine you need two separate doses, normally given at around one and four years of age. Some young adults may have missed out on their second immunisation when this was first introduced, so check with your parents or with your family doctor or nurse that you have had **both** doses of the MMR vaccine. If you have only had one then you could still be at risk.

What is meningitis?

Meningitis is inflammation of the lining around the brain. It can be caused by many different viruses and bacteria, and is spread through close contact.

Bacterial meningitis is a life-threatening illness that usually comes on very fast. The symptoms include vomiting and headache, often with neck stiffness, and dislike of bright lights. Some meningitis bugs can also cause blood poisoning, which may present with fever and a blotchy rash that does not fade when pressed with a glass. Leg pain, cold hands and feet, and pale, mottled skin may also develop.

How to protect yourself from meningitis

The **Men C** vaccine can protect you from one of the forms of bacterial meningitis. If you are unsure whether you have had the vaccine, please check with your parents or see your family doctor or nurse. It is important to remember that the Men C vaccine does not protect against all forms of meningitis so you still need to be aware of the signs and symptoms of this illness.

To learn more about the symptoms, you can ring the following helplines for free, 24 hours a day:

Meningitis Research Foundation 080 88003344 or
Meningitis Trust 0800 0281828

If you think you or any of your friends might be developing meningitis, seek medical care immediately.

If you think you need the Men C vaccine, then contact your GP practice to arrange an appointment. You may need to sign up to a practice. If this is the case, you can contact your university, or call **NHS Direct** on **0845 4647** to find your nearest GP practice. Or visit www.nhs.uk

If you are an overseas student and are not sure whether you have been immunised, it is important that you find out. If you cannot access your immunisation history, you should register with your local GP or university health services to get immunised.

You can find further advice on the websites www.hpa.org.uk and www.nhs.uk