

Measles, Mumps and Rubella (MMR) Vaccinations

Important message for parents and carers

An increasing number of measles cases are continuing to be seen across the country. While Worcestershire has one of the best rates for uptake, some children who haven't had their MMR could be at risk of getting this serious illness.

Two doses of the MMR vaccine are given to make sure we have the best protection from measles. The first dose is given at 12 months of age and the second dose is given at three years and four months, before starting school. For anybody who did not receive the full vaccination course, your own GP will be able to provide a catch-up MMR vaccination.

The MMR vaccine is a safe and effective combined vaccine that protects against three serious illnesses: Measles, Mumps and Rubella. Overall, Worcestershire has an excellent uptake of the MMR vaccine; for 5-year-olds, the county shows as having an uptake of 96.4% (1 dose) and 91.3% (2 doses). The 1 dose figure is joint highest in the West Midlands region and the 2-dose uptake is the outright highest in the region. Having the vaccine protects not only the child but also reduces the spread of the disease. This relies on as many people as possible being vaccinated and is why Public Health experts in the county are keen to continue to encourage all children to be vaccinated.

Measles is a very infectious viral illness that is spread by coughs and sneezes. It usually starts with cold-like symptoms which can include a high temperature, a runny or blocked nose, sneezing, a cough, sore red eyes and a rash. It spreads very quickly to non-immune children and adults who are unvaccinated or have not previously been infected.

NHS Herefordshire and Worcestershire and Public Health are holding pop-up MMR vaccination clinics in these areas. If your child hasn't had the MMR vaccination just turn up. You can ask for an MMR vaccine which does not contain pork ingredients if you prefer.

Not sure if you or your child have, had it? Just check your red NHS book or ask at your local GP.

The clinics are being hosted in libraries on the following dates:

- Kidderminster Library – 10th Feb, 9.30am until 4pm
- Wythall Library – 10th Feb, 9.30am until 4pm
- Redditch Library – 10th Feb, 9.30am until 4pm
- Evesham Library – 17th Feb, 9.30am until 4pm
- Malvern Library – 17th Feb, 9.30 am until 4pm
- The Hive – 17th Feb, 9.30 am until 4pm

The pop-up MMR clinic is free, and no appointment is necessary but if you'd prefer an appointment, you can also book ahead by calling 01527 390030.

If anyone has symptoms of measles, please stay at home and phone your GP or NHS 111 for advice. Do not go to GP surgeries or A & E departments so the illness isn't spread to others.

For more information on measles and the MMR vaccine please visit: Measles - NHS (www.nhs.uk)