

Health Unit Media Release

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CATCH-UP VACCINATIONS OFFERED TO YOUNG ADULTS AT RISK FOR CONTAGIOUS MUMPS

Young adults, who may be at risk of developing mumps, are being offered a chance to be protected in a catch-up program organized by the Leeds, Grenville and Lanark District Health Unit. College and university students are particularly at risk because they may not have received a second dose of mumps vaccine required for full protection and they live and socialize in close proximity. The Ontario government and the province's public health units are encouraging young adults (17 – 25 years of age) to receive their measles, mumps, rubella (MMR) vaccine. The move comes in response to mumps outbreaks in Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Alberta and British Columbia.

Most people born between 1970 and 1991 received only a single dose of the combined MMR (measles, mumps, rubella) vaccine and are at risk for mumps. People born in 1992 or after should have received two doses of the MMR vaccine. People born before 1970 are assumed to be immune to mumps through natural infection. **To be fully protected from contracting mumps, two doses of the MMR vaccine are required. The Leeds, Grenville and Lanark District Health Unit will be offering the MMR vaccine to all current students 17 years and older either at on campus clinics or at their regular Health Unit immunization clinics.** The vaccination is also available through family doctors for anyone who needs a second dose of MMR.

All young adults are encouraged to review their personal immunization record to determine if they need a second dose of the vaccine. **If individuals cannot locate their immunization record, it is recommended that they take advantage of the catch-up program and receive one dose.**

The health unit will be offering on campus MMR Catch Up Clinics for students at

- Algonquin College – Perth Campus on February 26, 2009, 9:00 am to 3:00 pm
- St. Lawrence College – Brockville Campus on February 27, 2009, 9:00 am to 3:00 pm
- University of Guelph – Kemptville Campus on March 2, 2009, 10:00 am to 4:00 pm

All other students are encouraged to make an appointment either with their health care provider or at a Health Unit immunization clinic. For clinic times, please call 1-800-660-5853 or your local Health Unit office.

QUICK FACTS

- Mumps is a contagious disease that is spread from person-to-person through direct contact with respiratory droplets from the mouth or nose of an infected person. This can happen when an infected person coughs or sneezes. Mumps can also be spread through sharing drinks and kissing.
- Mumps is preventable by immunization. Symptoms, which usually last ten days, include fever, headache, muscle aches and pains, tiredness, loss of appetite; followed by painful swelling of one or both salivary glands. Mumps can also have serious complications.
- Mumps is an acute viral illness and therefore cannot be treated with antibiotics. If infected with mumps, it means spending on average nine days in isolation to make sure it is not spread to others.
- The combined vaccine that protects against mumps is called MMR (measles, mumps, rubella) vaccine. It is safe and effective in protecting against all three diseases.
- This vaccine is not recommended for those that are pregnant.

LEARN MORE: Read more about mumps at www.ontario.ca/mumps

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