HSE urges parents to make sure children and young people are vaccinated against measles

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* Significant increase in cases in Europe and particularly in the UK
* Check your children are up-to-date with MMR vaccine

The HSE is urging parents to make sure children and young people are up to date with their MMR vaccine due to a rise in cases in parts of the UK and Europe. The MMR vaccine protects against measles, mumps and rubella. We advise people to be vigilant and take necessary steps to prevent the spread of this highly contagious virus.

Measles can be unpleasant and is a potentially serious and highly infectious disease that can spread easily through respiratory droplets. To safeguard our communities, the HSE recommends that people make sure they are up to date with MMR vaccine to prevent spread of the disease if cases occur in Ireland.

The importance of taking precautions to protect both the individual and the community from measles cannot be understated. While measles is preventable through vaccination, the virus spreads very quickly between people who are not vaccinated and can have severe consequences, particularly for babies and vulnerable groups.

Getting vaccinated against diseases like measles, mumps and rubella is vitally important as these conditions can also lead to other serious problems including meningitis, hearing loss and problems during pregnancy. Remember, if you or your child has missed their childhood vaccines, it’s not too late to catch up.

**What you do to protect your family and community against measles**

**Check vaccination status**
Ensure that you and your family members are up-to-date with the measles, mumps, and rubella (MMR) vaccine. Contact your GP to check if your child’s vaccinations are up-to-date.

Vaccination is the most effective way to prevent measles and protect against its complications. Two doses are recommended to be considered fully vaccinated. The first dose is given when your child is 12 months of age. It is important to get the first MMR on time at 12 months and not delay because measles is more severe in young children. The second dose is due when your child is in junior infants. If you or your family members have missed an MMR vaccine, it is strongly advised to schedule a vaccination appointment with your GP.

With the mid-term break coming up, it is particularly important that anyone travelling to the UK ensures they have received the right number of MMR vaccines for their age.

**Practice good hygiene**
Maintain proper hand hygiene by washing hands frequently with soap and water.
Avoid touching your face, especially your eyes, nose, and mouth, to reduce the risk of infection.

**Monitor for symptoms**
Stay vigilant for symptoms of measles. These include:

* high fever
* cough
* runny nose
* characteristic red rash.

If you or a family member develop these symptoms, or have been in contact with someone with measles, stay at home and contact your doctor by phone for advice, and inform healthcare providers of any recent travel history.
If you think someone in your family has measles, phone your doctor immediately for advice. Keep the child or adult at home and refrain from visitors coming to your home unless they know they are protected against measles (they have had two doses of MMR vaccine).

Further information about the MMR vaccination is available at [www.immunisation.ie](https://www.hse.ie/eng/health/immunisation/).

See the HSE website for more information about the signs and symptoms, treatment and risks of measles <https://www2.hse.ie/conditions/measles>.

[**MEASLES**](https://www.hpsc.ie/a-z/vaccinepreventable/measles/)

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* [Surveillance Reports](https://www.hpsc.ie/a-z/vaccinepreventable/measles/surveillancereports/)
* [Guidance](https://www.hpsc.ie/a-z/vaccinepreventable/measles/guidance/)
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* [Death of an adult with confirmed measles in Dublin and Midlands Health Region](https://www.hpsc.ie/news/title-24083-en.html)8 February 2024
* [Influenza activity continues at high levels](https://www.hpsc.ie/news/title-24056-en.html)2 February 2024
* [HSE urges parents to make sure children and young people are vaccinated against measles](https://www.hpsc.ie/news/title-24045-en.html)29 January 2024
* [Measles cases require urgent notification](https://www.hpsc.ie/news/title-24037-en.html)24 January 2024

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