

Department of Oncology & Haematology
Secretaries: 0151 252 5284 / 0151 293 3679 / 0151 293 3680
Keyworkers/ Oncology Clinical Nurse Specialists: 0151 252 5408

Oncology Service Measles Parent/Guardian Advice 19/01/24

Dear Parent/ Guardian,

Across the UK over recent weeks there have been an increasing number of cases of children catching measles. Measles is very contagious and can be serious, especially in those who are immunosuppressed including those who are receiving/ have received anti-cancer treatment (Chemotherapy).

A: Information for children on treatment (or within 3-months of completing chemotherapy (not stem cell transplant):

1. Children receiving chemotherapy (or less than 3 months after the end of treatment) cannot have the MMR vaccine
2. Household contacts of a child undergoing treatment for cancer should all have received their MMR vaccine (1st dose at 1 year of age and 2nd dose at 3 years,4 months). If you are uncertain whether everyone in the household has had their measles vaccine , please contact your GP surgery now to confirm vaccination status or arrange an immunisation.
3. If you are concerned about receiving the MMR vaccine, please do discuss this with your GP or child's consultant. This vaccine is safe and effective, and we can be reassuring and confident in its use but are aware of some misinformation that sometimes circulates. The Oxford Vaccine Group website contains very useful information from trusted sources <https://vaccineknowledge.ox.ac.uk/home>
4. Please remind your child's school (they were informed of this at diagnosis by your child's key worker nurse specialist) that should there be a case of suspected (not necessarily proven) measles in your child's class, to let you know.
5. If you think, or you are informed, that your child has been in contact with another child/person with measles please contact your keyworker / Oncology Clinical Nurse Specialist BY TELEPHONE as above, and we will arrange next steps. Out of normal working hours this can be the oncology ward (3B)

B: Information for children who have finished treatment more than 3 months ago:

For children who have finished chemotherapy treatment and have NOT received a stem cell transplant, immunisations or reimmunisation boosters should start from 3 months after treatment ends. This includes the MMR vaccine. If this has not occurred, then please contact your child's consultant secretary or keyworker/ Oncology Clinical Nurse Specialist who will provide your GP with an immunisation schedule to start ASAP. Please do not contact 3B inpatient or daycare wards about this.

C: Information for children who have received a stem cell transplant

For those who have had a stem cell transplant, a personalised schedule of immunisations should be discussed with your consultant. Unless have received the MMR immunisation since treatment, please follow the same advice as for those patients on treatment (section A above).

Oncology & Haematology Team