



Safety Alert

Infectious Diseases – Advice from Public Health

Measles and COVID cases in Calderdale

Measles

There is evidence of measles transmission in Calderdale at the moment. It's the most contagious of all the airborne viruses and can spread very quickly in groups of people who aren't fully vaccinated. You can help raise awareness of measles and the importance of vaccination by sharing information with family, friends and those who use our services. Please watch the video [here](#) to discover how you can protect yourself and your family and the signs and symptoms to look out for.

Protecting yourself and others from getting measles

Many of us don't think about measles, we don't know anyone that's had it because it was almost eradicated in the UK due to measles vaccination being introduced in the UK in the late 1960s. We estimate that 20 million measles cases, and 4,500 deaths, have been prevented in the UK since the measles vaccination was introduced.

Two doses of the MMR vaccine gives lifetime protection against getting measles and passing it on. When fewer than 95% of the population are fully vaccinated, there's a risk measles will spread. The good news is that vaccination uptake in babies and toddlers in Calderdale is high. 94% of babies and toddlers in Calderdale have had one dose of MMR. Uptake of the MMR vaccine reduced for a time 20-25 years ago. That means that some young adults in Calderdale could be at increased risk of getting measles and passing it on to others.

Some of our local GP practices are inviting people who aren't fully vaccinated to get the vaccine. Calderdale Council is recommending that you do take up the offer if you're invited. It's never too late to get the MMR vaccine. Please check whether you and your child have had 2 doses. If you're not sure whether or not you/they have had the vaccine, your GP practice will know.

If you haven't had 2 doses of MMR, contact your GP practice to make an appointment. The team at the practice will be very pleased to see you!



Symptoms of measles

The symptoms of measles start with a high temperature, a runny or blocked nose,

sneezing, a cough and red watery eyes. You may notice white spots in your/your child's mouth. A few days after the cold like symptoms a rash appears, usually starting on the face and behind the ears, before spreading to the rest of the body. Measles can be a very nasty disease and in rare cases can lead to more serious complications. It's very unlikely to be measles if you/your child has had 2 doses of the MMR vaccine.

If you suspect measles, contact your GP or the NHS on 111 and ask for an urgent appointment, telling them you think it might be measles. This is so that they can arrange for you to visit the practice in a way that reduces the risk of passing measles on to others.

COVID Latest

There's a new variant of COVID-19 circulating at the moment. Now we don't have routine testing, we don't know how prevalent the variant is in Calderdale, but we all probably know somebody who has had COVID-19 recently.

Tests aren't widely available anymore and most people have to pay for them, so if you feel unwell with symptoms such as a cough, sore throat and high temperature, please stay away from the workplace for at least five days since the symptoms began, if you can. This will prevent you passing any viruses on to other individuals whether or not it is COVID-19. It's important to remember that many of us have colleagues who are immunosuppressed or who live with family members or loved ones who are.

You'll remember from the pandemic that there are a few simple measures which we can all do, which really can help protect ourselves and each other from infection:

- Wash your hands regularly for at least 20 seconds with warm water and soap.
- Remember to 'Catch it, Bin it, kill it' if you sneeze or cough.
- Avoid large indoor group sessions (where possible) and open windows to improve ventilation.
- Services working with vulnerable people should always implement infection control measures.

Don't come into work if you have any symptoms of respiratory illness including a cough, sore throat or a fever. Work from home if you feel well enough and if you feel too poorly, take sick leave. It's better to rest and recover quickly than share a virus with colleagues.



