



University of Iowa and Johnson County Public Health News Release

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UI offers mumps vaccine free of charge to students under 25

Health specialists today urged all students less than 25 years of age at the University of Iowa to receive a third dose of the measles, mumps, and rubella (MMR) vaccine free of charge at special clinics on campus over the next week to help protect students from the mumps and its complications, and to reduce the spread of the infection - not only in the campus community - but across the state and outside Iowa.

"We have seen more than 100 cases of mumps in our community in the last few months and the numbers have been increasing in recent weeks," said Kathleen Wittich, MD, Medical Director, UI Student Health and Wellness. "We are strongly recommending that students who are at the highest risk for mumps, those under 25, receive a third dose of the MMR vaccine, especially before they leave for the Thanksgiving holiday break."

Wittich added that all UI students who have not yet received at least two doses of the MMR vaccine should do so immediately.

The UI will offer multiple opportunities for UI students under 25 to receive the MMR vaccine free of charge, including:

- November 10 – Iowa Memorial Union Main Lounge – 10 a.m. to 7 p.m.

- November 11 – Iowa Memorial Union 2nd Floor Ballroom - 10 a.m. to 7 p.m.
- November 16 – Burge Hall – 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.
- November 16 – Mayflower Hall – 4 p.m. to 9 p.m.
- November 17 – Hillcrest Hall – 4 p.m. to 9 p.m.

A list of the time and locations is available online at: <http://studenthealth.uiowa.edu>. Additional free MMR clinics will be added as needed. Students under 25 need to bring their student identification card with them to receive the vaccine.

“The decision to provide a third dose of the MMR vaccine is a proactive approach to curtail this illness,” said Doug Beardsley, Johnson County Public Health director. “At this time, we do not anticipate a threat to the general public, but we are continuing to monitor the situation closely.”

Unfortunately, immunity from the mumps vaccines (that most students had received prior to starting kindergarten) has waned, and needs to be boosted. Students under 25 living in close quarters such as dorms, apartments, fraternities and sororities, and those who participate in group activities such as athletics, band, and social events, face the highest risk and especially need a third MMR dose.

“While mumps can cause fever and painful, swollen glands and can cause students to miss many days of classes, there is also the possibility of serious long term complications such as deafness and testicular swelling, which can result in sterility. Both of those complications have already occurred in students,” said Dr. Patricia Quinlisk, Medical Director, Iowa Department of Public Health. “Mumps can also rarely cause inflammation of the brain and pancreatic problems. Bottom line, this is not a disease that you want to get”.

Infectious disease specialists report that they are not seeing widespread cases of mumps off the UI campus. The people most at risk for the disease are students who are

under 25 who live in close quarters. Prevention experts say that is why they are strongly recommending that students under 25, especially those living in residence halls, fraternities and sororities, receive the third dose of the MMR vaccine.

There is no recommendation currently that UI students 25 and older, faculty or staff receive a third MMR dose. UI students 25 and older, faculty and staff may contact their health care providers with any questions or concerns.

To stop students from becoming ill and to prevent further spread, it is important that as many students as possible receive the third dose of the MMR vaccine in the next two weeks.

More information about mumps is available online from the Centers of Disease Control and Prevention at: <http://www.cdc.gov/mumps>.

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