

August 2024

To all new students

VERY IMPORTANT HEALTH INFORMATION – IMMUNISATIONS

Based on the advice of UK Health Security Agency and the Oxford College Doctors' Association, the University of Oxford's Student Welfare and Support Services **strongly recommends** that you receive the following vaccines **before** you arrive in Oxford, if you have not already received them:

- Meningococcal ACWY (MenACWY) if you are under 25 years of age
- Measles Mumps and Rubella - MMR1 and MMR 2, i.e. the normal two doses

You can contact your General Practice to arrange these vaccinations or to check if you have already been vaccinated if you are unsure. Both immunisations should be readily available outside the UK for international students.

FURTHER INFORMATION: MENINGOCOCCAL DISEASE

Although meningococcal disease is rare, as a new student you may be at higher risk of contracting meningococcal disease and spreading it to others, as you are likely to be mixing closely with lots of new people, some of whom may unknowingly be carrying the meningococcal bacteria. Meningococcal disease can cause meningitis (inflammation of the membrane around the brain) and septicaemia (blood poisoning) which can be life threatening if not treated quickly. Meningitis and septicaemia can develop suddenly. Symptoms include a blotchy rash that doesn't fade when a glass is rolled over it, fever, headache, aching muscles and joints and a stiff neck. The MenW strain can also cause vomiting and diarrhoea in teenagers and young adults. Urgent antibiotic treatment and hospitalisation are critical.

Please note that meningitis is not the same condition as encephalitis, against which students from some countries might have been immunised. If you have been immunised against any form of encephalitis, you will still need the MenACWY vaccine.

Further information on [meningitis](#) and the [MenACWY vaccine](#) is available on the [NHS website](#).

FURTHER INFORMATION: MEASLES, MUMPS AND RUBELLA (MMR)

There has also been a significant increase in measles cases in the UK this year. Measles is an infection that spreads very easily and can cause serious problems in some people. In addition, several outbreaks of mumps have occurred at both universities in Oxford and, year-on-year, the number of cases continues to be significant.

Two doses of the MMR vaccine gives you long-term protection from both measles and mumps, as well as rubella. If you are not certain that you have received the two MMR immunisations, we recommend that you check this with your General Practitioner or your doctor and if you have not received both vaccinations obtain them before arriving at University. There should be at least a month between each dose. If you do not have time to have both doses before arrival in Oxford, this can be arranged when you register with a doctor in Oxford.

Further information on [measles](#), [mumps](#) and [rubella](#), and the [MMR vaccination](#) is available on the [NHS website](#).

FURTHER INFORMATION: HPV VACCINE

The [HPV vaccine](#) helps protect against genital warts and cancers (such as cervical cancer and some cancers of the anus and genital areas) caused by the human papilloma virus (HPV).

If you missed the HPV vaccine at school, you can still ask your General Practitioner for this vaccine up until your 25th birthday (for women born after 1 September 1991 and men born after 1 September 2006).

OTHER HEALTH ADVICE: INFLUENZA AND COVID-19

Some students might be at an increased risk of getting seriously ill from influenza and/or Covid-19. If you think you might be in a high clinical risk group, contact your General Practitioner at the start of term to see if you need to have a [flu vaccine](#) or a [first covid-19 vaccine or booster](#), and read more about the [National Flu Immunisation Programme](#) on the UK Government website.

ONCE IN OXFORD

All students are advised to register with their College Doctor or any other doctor in Oxford immediately upon arrival. On registering with a doctor you will be given an NHS Number if you do not already have one, and will be asked for the dates of your immunisations. You will also have an opportunity to arrange immunisations if you still need to receive them. If you have any further queries, please contact your college or doctor.

More information about college doctors and nurses is available on the [student webpages](#).

The NHS also provide advice on [getting medical care as a student](#).

Further sexual health advice can be found on the [Oxfordshire Sexual Health Service website](#).

Yours faithfully

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