



Commonwealth of Kentucky Cabinet for Health and Family Services

Statewide News Release

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College Age Kentuckians Should Ensure Mumps Vaccination *Recent Cases at Kentucky Universities Highlight Risk*

FRANKFORT, Ky. (March 9, 2016)— The Kentucky Department for Public Health (DPH) is advising parents of college students to make sure their child is up-to-date on vaccination for protection against mumps, an infectious disease that has been reported recently at Kentucky universities – as well as other college campuses around the country.

Public health officials say recent cases at the University of Kentucky and the University of Louisville underscore the importance of vaccines for college-age children. DPH encourages college students and their parents to check vaccination records and ensure college students are up-to-date on the measles, mumps and rubella (MMR) vaccine by having two doses at least 28 days apart.

“Absent of documentation that confirms two doses have been given, it would be prudent for students attending colleges or other post-high school educational institutions to receive another MMR vaccination,” said Dr. Ardis Hoven, an infectious disease specialist for DPH. “Please consult with your physician or health care provider regarding this important matter.”

Mumps is no longer common in the United States, but periodic mumps outbreaks can occur, particularly in winter and spring. Crowded environments, such as college classes, organized sports, or dormitories, are a major contributing factor to the spread of mumps if the virus is introduced. As the time for spring break on college campuses approaches and many students will be vacationing with friends, Kentucky college students may travel to places where mumps virus is circulating, thereby coming into close contact with people infectious with mumps.

Mumps is primarily known for swelling of the parotid glands, which results in puffy cheeks and swollen jaws. Other common symptoms include fever, headache, muscle aches and fatigue. Some people who get mumps have very mild or no symptoms, and do not know they are infected. However, serious complications can occur in adolescents and adults who have an active infection. These complications may include deafness, meningitis and inflammation of the reproductive organs. Of particular concern is mumps exposure to children under the age of one year, who are too young to be vaccinated and would be at risk of becoming infected.

The MMR vaccine prevents most, but not all, cases of mumps. Outbreaks can still occur among highly vaccinated communities, particularly those in close-contact settings. In recent years, outbreaks have occurred in schools and on college campuses. Increased vaccination rates help limit the size, duration and spread of mumps outbreaks.

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The Cabinet for Health and Family Services is home to most of the state's human services and healthcare programs, including the Department for Medicaid Services, the Department for Community Based Services the Department for Public Health and the Department for Behavioral Health, Developmental and Intellectual Disabilities. CHFS is one of the largest agencies in state government, with nearly 8,000 full- and part-time employees located across the Commonwealth focused on improving the lives and health of Kentuckians.