

## **MMR VACCINATION RESUMED**

Alberta is in the midst of a mumps outbreak, mostly associated with post-secondary environments or individuals who are 17-26 years of age. 439 cases of active mumps have been reported in the province since September 2007. 279 cases have been reported in Chinook Health Region, the epicenter of the current outbreak. There were 8 mumps cases confirmed in Alberta in 2006.

### **Routine MMR Vaccination Program**

**Children** - Children up to and including 17 years of age should have two doses of mumps-containing vaccine. Children aged one and 4 1/2 years receive MMR immunization as part of Alberta's Routine Vaccination Schedule. Children up to and including 17 years of age will be assessed as they present to public health to ensure they have had two mumps containing vaccines (i.e., at a Community Health Centre or Public Health Office or Calgary Health Region travel clinic). If they have received only one dose, another vaccination will be offered.

MMR vaccination is available for children whose second MMR vaccination was deferred. Parents can contact the local Community Health Centre or Public Health Office for an appointment.

### **Enhanced Adult MMR Vaccination Program**

**Adults** - The enhanced MMR program includes:

- Adults born in and between 1980 - 1990 who have not previously had mumps disease **or** received two doses of MMR vaccine **or** one recent dose of MMR.
- Health care workers born in 1970 or later who have not received two doses of vaccine. In Chinook Health Region, health care workers born before 1970 will also be offered one dose as the majority of cases are being reported in this region.
- Anyone born in or after 1970 living in a communal environment such as a work camp.
- Post-secondary students born in or after 1970.

**AND Do not have documentation of 2 doses of mumps-containing vaccine.**

MMR vaccination is available for eligible people who wish to be vaccinated. Please contact the nearest Community Health Centre or Public Health Office for an appointment.

### **Vaccine Cleared for Use**

A provincial enhanced mumps vaccination program was commenced in November that targeted post-secondary students and staff and individuals 17-26 years of age. Over 62,000 young adults were vaccinated throughout Alberta up to December 10, 2007.

This program was suspended on December 10, 2007 on the direction of Health Canada because of reports of serious allergic reactions reported in several young adults following mumps vaccination. Vaccine associated with these reactions was quarantined. Until the investigation was complete the young adult vaccination program was put hold.

The anaphylaxis cases have been reviewed by Alberta Health and Wellness and the Public Health Agency of Canada, as well as Health Canada Biologics and Genetic Therapies Directorate (BGTD), allergists and the vaccine manufacturer. The review determined that:

- MMR vaccine is safe.
- Manufacturing processes were not linked to the cases of anaphylaxis reported in Alberta.
- The lot numbers of MMR vaccine that were quarantined have been released for use across Canada.
- The reactions appear to be related to the individual hosts, all of whom had a history of allergies and a history of at least one dose of a measles containing vaccine in the past.

The investigation of the vaccine included analysis of all raw materials/components, the separate vaccine bulks, the mixing, filling and packaging of the vaccine, as well as distribution. No issues were found. The three lots of vaccine that were under investigation have been released for use across Canada for the routine MMR vaccination program.

Alberta Health and Wellness has worked with the health regions to address logistical issues as the enhanced mumps immunization program for adults is resumed.

## **Frequently Asked Questions**

### **I was born before 1970 and don't think that I had the mumps. Why don't I qualify for free vaccine?**

A large proportion of mumps cases in Alberta (Calgary) has been in the 17-26 year-old age group. People born before 1970 are not at as great a risk for mumps disease. It is assumed that the majority of Canadians over the age of approximately 40 years have natural immunity to mumps. The age for the natural immunity assumption is based upon the year that mumps vaccine was licensed in Canada in 1969. Mumps-containing vaccine programs were started in Canada in 1969. Therefore, natural exposure to mumps until at least 1969 as a result of naturally circulating disease would have been likely. The importance of general preventive measures needs to be emphasized: frequent hand hygiene, covering coughs and sneezes, avoiding sharing of items that have been in contact with others' saliva.

### **I go to a post-secondary institution and was born after 1970. Do I qualify for free vaccine?**

Yes. Individuals born in 1970 or later in Canada/US may have received zero or one dose of a mumps-containing vaccine as part of routine childhood vaccination programs. Because the rate of mumps disease is highest in post-secondary institutions in people born after 1970, this age group is being offered a second dose.

### **I was born between 1970 and 1980 but don't attend a post-secondary institution. Why don't I qualify for free vaccine?**

Many of the people who have been infected with mumps are also post-secondary students. The mobile and social lifestyles of post-secondary institution aged individuals may facilitate transmission of mumps disease and result in lack of adherence to isolation requests. People born between 1970 and 1980 are not at as great a risk for mumps disease if they do not attend a post-secondary institution.

### **Can I buy the vaccine if I am not eligible for a free shot?**

Clients who do not meet the eligibility criteria for free vaccine may purchase MMR vaccine on a cost recovery basis of \$40.00.

Please check the Calgary Health Region website for future updates or for more information contact Calgary Health Link at **403-943-LINK(5465)**

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