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AVAILABILITY OF MUMPS VACCINES

We regret that like all other Providers, we are currently unable to obtain further supplies of Mumps vaccine. The SOLE Manufacturers (Merck & Co, USA) have stopped making the vaccine, but have not indicated that they will restart manufacture. They have not indicated why they stopped making the vaccine.

Although we believe that we will be able to obtain ethical alternative Mumps vaccines in future, please be aware that we cannot guarantee this.

We will continue to provide single Measles and Rubella vaccines PROVIDING parents are aware that there may be a delay in obtaining Mumps vaccines, and a possibility that they may become unavailable.

ARE MUMPS VACCINES NECESSARY?

Like other Paediatricians, I have reservations about the need for vaccinating against Mumps, particularly in girls.

Mumps vaccines were introduced into this country in 1988. This produced a reduction in the number of cases of Mumps infections; only 94 were reported in 1996. Since then numbers have increased, reaching 2440 in 2008 (Dept of Health data). This increase is due to the failure of the combined MMR vaccine to provide adequate long term protection against Mumps.

Mumps can be an unpleasant illness, particularly in older children and adults, BUT it is neither brain-damaging nor life-threatening.

There are a number of scaremongering stories about Mumps side effects:

1. Mumps can cause meningitis.
This is true, BUT Mumps is a virus, and viral meningitis is neither life-threatening nor brain-damaging, **unlike** bacterial meningitis (e.g. Men C) which certainly is.
2. Mumps can cause deafness.
This is also true, BUT is one-sided and temporary.
3. Mumps can cause infertility in males.
This is probably true, **BUT** is very rare, and only occurs in males who develop Mumps infections after the testicles have matured at puberty. Almost invariably only one testicle is affected, which does NOT affect fertility unless the other testicle is also damaged by another cause (usually trauma).

Dr John Oakley – Feb 2010.

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IMPORTANT NOTICE

The information and opinions in this document has been checked by me, Dr John Oakley, and I believe them to be correct. They are designed only as a supplement to a full consultation with me and should not be used as a single definitive source of information. My opinion may differ from that of some other Doctors. If in doubt, please consult another suitably qualified and informed medical professional.