

July 2024

To all students entering Keio University and their guardians,

Request for the participation in an action for the prevention of outbreaks of Measles, Mumps, Rubella and Varicella (Chickenpox) on campus

In 2007, there was an outbreak of measles among high school and university students, and many schools were forced to close in Japan. There have also been recorded incidents of rubella, mumps, and varicella (chickenpox) outbreaks among adults.

These diseases can be prevented through vaccination. Currently, the international consensus is that two vaccine doses against each of the viruses that cause these diseases can grant lifetime immunity to infection. In the U.S., major universities comply with state law requiring students to vaccinate against these viruses prior to enrollment.

Japan has no such laws, meaning that schools cannot force incoming students to vaccinate. Nonetheless, we implore each student to consider receiving a vaccination—either before enrollment or shortly thereafter—to reduce their personal risk of contracting these viral infections as well as to help prevent the outbreak of these infectious diseases on campus.

For measles and rubella, we encourage students to follow the official recommendation of the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) and receive two shots for each. We also urge students to receive at least one vaccine dose for mumps and varicella, respectively. Those who have already taken these steps need not seek out additional inoculations (although you are free to pursue a second dose for either mumps or varicella).

If you have already contracted measles, rubella, mumps, and/or varicella, you may not need to be vaccinated. However, please note that there are cases in which you may be required to present proof of immunity for these diseases via antibody test results when visiting schools or other public institutions in Japan and overseas. We strongly recommend that such students undergo an antibody titer test as soon as possible. Please bear in mind that even if you have contracted and recovered from one of these illnesses in the past, depending on your antibody test results, you may still be required to vaccinate. In such cases, please follow the instructions from the medical institution where you underwent testing. We understand that some students may not be able to vaccinate due to preexisting medical conditions. Please consult your doctor to determine whether you are able to be vaccinated.

Your understanding and cooperation are greatly appreciated.

For those entering medical-related undergraduate and graduate programs, Students entering medical undergraduate faculties and graduate schools are subject to separate rules regarding measures to prevent outbreaks of epidemic viral diseases, as they will be required to make visits to the Keio University Hospital and various other medical institutions. Please follow the relevant guidance issued after enrollment.

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