

# Important Information about Measles, Mumps and Rubella Diseases and Measles, Mumps and Rubella (MMR) Vaccine

## PLEASE READ THIS CAREFULLY

### What is MEASLES?

- It is a severe, highly contagious illness caused by a virus and can affect both children and adults.
- It causes a rash, high fever, cough, runny nose and watery eyes lasting 1 to 2 weeks.
- It may lead to ear infections and pneumonia.
- It may result in encephalitis (inflammation of the brain) which occurs in about one in 1,000 people and may result in seizures or deafness.
- It can be a life-threatening disease.
- It is preventable by immunization.

### What is MUMPS?

- It is a severe, highly contagious illness caused by a virus and can affect both children and adults.
- It causes fever, headache and inflammation of the salivary glands. This causes the cheeks to swell.
- It may cause a mild inflammation of the covering of the brain and spinal cord (meningitis).
- It may also cause encephalitis (inflammation of the brain).
- It can cause deafness.
- It may cause painful inflammation and swelling of the testicles or abdominal pain.
- It is preventable by immunization.

### What is RUBELLA?

- It is a severe, highly contagious illness caused by a virus and can affect both children and adults.
- It is also called German measles.
- It can cause encephalitis (inflammation of the brain).
- It causes a slight fever, rash and swelling of nodes in the neck which lasts about 3 days.

- It may result in swelling and aching of the joints which lasts for a week or two.
- It may lead to a temporary bleeding disorder (purpura).
- It can cause deformities of the unborn child, if rubella occurs during pregnancy.
- It is preventable by immunization.

### What is MMR Vaccine?

- MMR vaccine is a single vaccine which protects against measles, mumps, and rubella.
- MMR vaccine contains a tiny amount of live virus that is specially treated so that it won't cause the disease in healthy people.
- Immunization with MMR vaccine is the best way to prevent measles, mumps and rubella.
- The vaccine is given by injection.

### Who Should Receive MMR Vaccine?

- The Nova Scotia schedule recommends this vaccine be given at age 12 months and again between 18 months and 6 years of age.
- Anyone born in 1970 or later should receive 2 doses of MMR vaccine.
- Anyone born before 1970 without measles immunity should receive 1 booster dose of a measles-containing vaccine if they are travelling to areas where measles is a concern.
- Babies 6 months to less than 12 months of age, who are travelling to areas where measles is a concern. These babies may receive one additional dose of MMR vaccine before their two scheduled doses of MMR-containing vaccine at 12 months and 18 months. A total of three doses is required for the child to be fully protected in this case.

### CAUTION

*SOME PEOPLE SHOULD CHECK WITH A HEALTH CARE PROVIDER BEFORE THEY RECEIVE THIS VACCINE.*

- People whose immune systems are weakened because of disease or certain medications.
- Anyone who has received any blood product within the preceding 3–11 months.

### Who Should NOT Receive MMR Vaccine?

- This vaccine is not recommended for pregnant people. If a pregnant person wishes to get any of these vaccines, they should ideally wait at least 1 month before getting pregnant.
- People who have had a serious allergic reaction to a previous dose or any component of MMR vaccine.
- MMR and Varicella vaccines can be given at the same time. If not given on the same day, there should be 4 weeks between receiving each vaccine.
- People who are sick or have a fever (temperature of 38.5°C/101.3°F or greater).

*Please read other side.*

# What to Expect Following Immunization with Measles, Mumps and Rubella (MMR) Vaccine

## VACCINE INFORMATION

This vaccine is important in protecting you or your child from measles, mumps, and rubella.

*People should stay in the clinic for at least 15 minutes after receiving any type of immunization to monitor possible reaction. As with any vaccine there is a slight possibility that a more serious reaction could occur.*

### Possible Side Effects from the Vaccine

- Common side effects include:
  - Redness, swelling and pain where the needle goes in.
  - A fever, rash, sore throat and headache may occur about 5–12 days after the vaccination, and may last 1–2 days.
  - Rarely, pain and/or swelling of the testicle(s) may occur.

*As fever may occur, make sure you have acetaminophen or ibuprofen at home. Follow the instructions that come with the product. These medications should not be taken if you have certain medical conditions. Talk to your health care provider about your medical history before using either of these medications.*

### Contact Your Health Care Provider If:

- The fever lasts longer than 24 hours.
- Temperature is 38.5°C (101.3°F) or greater.
- The fever does not come down after acetaminophen or ibuprofen is taken.
- You or your child experience a seizure.
- You or your child are ill with other symptoms.

### QUESTIONS:

If you have any questions regarding measles, mumps, or rubella or the MMR vaccine, please call your local Public Health office, or your health care provider.

For more information on immunization, please visit the websites of

- Immunize Canada at [immunize.ca/en/default.aspx](https://immunize.ca/en/default.aspx)
- the Public Health Agency of Canada at [phac-aspc.gc.ca](https://phac-aspc.gc.ca)
- the Canadian Paediatric Society at [cps.ca](https://cps.ca)
- 811 at <https://811.novascotia.ca/>