



Important Information About Measles, Mumps, Rubella and Varicella Diseases and the Measles, Mumps, Rubella and Varicella (MMRV) Vaccine

? What is measles?

- It is a severe, highly contagious illness caused by a virus and can affect both children and adults.
- It can cause 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 may result in inflammation of the brain (encephalitis) which occurs in about one in 1,000 people and may result in seizures or permanent hearing loss.
- 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 painful swelling of the testicles or abdominal pain.
- It may cause inflammation of the covering of the brain and spinal cord (meningitis), encephalitis or permanent hearing loss.
- 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 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 encephalitis.
- It can cause deformities of the unborn child, if rubella occurs during pregnancy.
- It is preventable by immunization.

? What is varicella (chickenpox)?

- Chickenpox is a common childhood disease caused by the varicella virus.
- It usually causes a mild fever followed by an itchy rash.
- On rare occasions it can lead to severe illness and hospitalization. It can be life threatening.
- It can be more severe in adolescents and adults.
- It can cause serious illness during pregnancy both for the pregnant parent and baby.
- It is highly contagious, and spreads easily from person to person through direct contact, or when someone breathes the same air as an infected person.
- It is preventable through immunization.

? What is the MMRV vaccine?

- The MMRV vaccine is one vaccine which protects against measles, mumps, rubella and varicella.
- The MMRV vaccine contains a tiny amount of live virus that is specially treated so that it won't cause disease.
- Immunization with the MMRV vaccine is the best way to prevent measles, mumps, rubella and varicella.
- The vaccine is given by injection.
- Ninety percent or more of the people who receive the vaccine will have full protection for life.
- Two doses are required for full protection.

? Who should receive the MMRV vaccine?

The Nova Scotia Routine Immunization Schedules for Children, Youth & Adults recommends two doses of this vaccine be given: one at age 12 months and one at 18 months.

If this vaccine is missed, it can be provided until 12 years of age. Alternative products can still be provided after this age.

Some people should check with a healthcare 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.

Please read other side.



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? Who should NOT receive the MMRV vaccine?

- Children less than 12 months of age.
- This vaccine is not recommended for people over the age of 12. If a person over the age of 12 wants to get vaccinated against measles, mumps, rubella, and varicella, should receive the MMR and varicella vaccines separately.
- People who have had a serious allergic reaction to a previous dose of the MMR or varicella vaccine.
- People who are sick or have a fever (temperature of 38.5°C/101.3°F or greater).

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.

? What are the possible side effects from the MMRV vaccine?

- As with any other vaccine, the most common side effects are soreness, redness, or swelling at the injection site.
- A fever, rash, sore throat and headache may occur about 7-21 days after the vaccination.
- Rarely, pain and/or swelling of the testicle(s) may occur.
- Some may get a mild fever and chickenpox-like spots 1 to 2 weeks after vaccination. The rash should be covered if your child may be in contact with someone who has a weak immune system.

Over-the-counter pain relievers such as ibuprofen (e.g., Advil) and acetaminophen (e.g., Tylenol) can be used to manage symptoms following vaccination, including fever.

Do not give aspirin (ASA) or any products that contain aspirin. Giving aspirin to a child with chickenpox can trigger Reye's syndrome, a life-threatening condition that involves brain and liver swelling.

Some people should not take these medications. Talk to your healthcare provider before using either of these medications as they are not recommended for people with certain medical conditions.

Call your healthcare provider if:

- A fever lasts longer than 24 hours.
- A fever is 38.5°C (101.3°F) or higher.
- A fever doesn't come down after acetaminophen or ibuprofen are taken.
- A seizure occurs.
- Other illness or symptoms occur.

? Questions?

If you have any questions about measles, mumps, rubella or varicella disease or the MMRV vaccine, please call your local Public Health office (see list of offices here: www.nshealth.ca/public-health) or your healthcare provider.

For more information on immunization, please visit the following websites:

Nova Scotia Health Public Health
www.nshealth.ca/immunizations

Immunize Canada
immunize.ca

Public Health Agency of Canada
www.canada.ca/public-health

Canadian Paediatric Society
cps.ca

811
811.novascotia.ca