



Northwestern
Health Unit

www.nwhu.on.ca

Measles, Mumps, Rubella, and Varicella (MMRV) Vaccine

This vaccine protects against measles, mumps, rubella and chicken pox diseases.

Who should get the vaccine?

- Offered to children 4 -6 years of age as part of their routine immunization schedule
- Publicly funded for all children 4 – 11 years of age inclusive

Who should not get the vaccine?

- Children with allergies to any component of the vaccine
- Children with neomycin allergy
- Previous reaction to either the MMR or the chicken pox vaccine
- High fever or serious infection worse than a cold
- **Consult with health care provider if you child has:**
 - Weakened immune system
 - Received blood products

Common Side Effects

Common side effects include redness, swelling and tenderness in the area where the needle was given. Fever, and/or rash can occur 4 to 12 days after getting the vaccine. The rash can be blotchy red and/or the spots can look like blisters.

Measles

Measles is a serious infection. It causes high fever, cough, rash, runny nose and watery eyes. Measles lasts for one to two weeks. It can be complicated by ear infections or pneumonia in one out of every 10 children with measles. Measles can also be complicated by encephalitis, an infection of the brain, in about one out of every 1,000 children with measles. Measles causes death in one in about 3,000 cases. Measles can also make a pregnant woman have a miscarriage or give birth prematurely.

Measles spreads very easily. It is passed from an infected person to others through coughing, sneezing and even talking.

Mumps

Mumps can cause fever, headaches and swelling of the cheeks and jaw. The swelling is caused by an infection of the salivary glands. Mumps can cause meningitis, an infection of the fluid and lining covering the brain and spinal cord. Mumps can cause deafness in some persons.

Mumps can cause very painful, swollen testicles in about one out of 4 teenage boys or adult men. This may rarely cause sterility. Mumps can cause a painful infection of the ovaries in one out of 20 women. Mumps infection during the first three months of pregnancy may increase the risk of

miscarriage. People can get mumps from an infected person coughing or sneezing around them or simply talking to them. It can also be spread through contact with the saliva of an infected person.

Rubella (German Measles)

Rubella is very dangerous in pregnant women. If a woman gets rubella in the early part of a pregnancy, it is very likely that her baby will die or have severe health complications.

Rubella is usually a mild illness in children; up to half of the infections with rubella occur without a rash. The disease can be more severe in older children and adults especially women. Rubella may cause fever, sore throat, swollen glands in the neck and a rash on the face and neck. Temporary aches and pains and swelling of the joints are common in adolescents and adults, especially females.

Rubella spreads by contact with an infected person through coughing, sneezing or talking to them. It can also be spread by contact with the saliva of infected people.

Chicken Pox

Children with chicken pox will feel flu-like symptoms such as fatigue, mild headache, fever up to 39° C (102° F), chills and muscle or joint aches a day or two before the itchy, red rash appears.

The rash appears anywhere on the body as raised red blisters that are extremely itchy. The child will be most infectious (contagious) from one to two days before the rash appears. These blisters dry up and form scabs in four to five days.

Chicken pox is extremely contagious. The most common way the infection is spread is through the air if someone with chicken pox coughs or sneezes. You can also get chicken pox if you touch a blister or the liquid from a blister.

A pregnant woman with chicken pox can pass it on to her unborn baby before birth. Mothers with chicken pox can also give it to their newborn baby after birth.

In about five to 10 per cent of healthy children, chicken pox infection can lead to more serious problems such as :

- bacterial skin infections and/or necrotizing fasciitis ("flesh-eating disease")
- pneumonia (infection of the lungs)
- encephalitis (infection of the brain)
- infection of other sites (e.g., blood)
- birth defects may occur if the baby gets chicken pox from their mothers before they are born.

For more information please call the
Northwestern Health Unit office in your area.

www.nwhu.on.ca