



## **Measles, Mumps and Rubella (MMR) Vaccine**

This 3 in 1 vaccine protects against measles, mumps and rubella (German measles).

### **Who should have the MMR vaccine?**

It should be given to children soon after their first birthday and a second dose is given in combination with varicella (chicken pox), as MMRV (a four-in-one needle) at 4-6 years of age.

This vaccine should also be given to adults who are not protected against measles, mumps or rubella. Pregnant women, who have been told that they are not protected against rubella, should receive MMR vaccine as soon as they are no longer pregnant.

### **Who should not have MMR vaccine?**

The following children and adults should not have MMR vaccine:

- Anyone who is ill with a fever or infection worse than a cold
- Anyone who has had a severe allergic reaction to a prior dose of this vaccine
- Anyone taking medication that lowers the body's ability to fight infections
- Women of childbearing age should be advised to avoid pregnancy for 1 month following immunization with MMR vaccine
- Anyone who is allergic to an antibiotic called neomycin

### **Common Side Effects**

Side effects includes a rash or fever in some children five to 12 days after the needle is given. This may last for a few days.

## **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.

For more information please call the  
Northwestern Health Unit in your area  
[www.nwhu.on.ca](http://www.nwhu.on.ca)