



Measles, Mumps, Rubella & Varicella (MMRV) Vaccine Fact Sheet

The MMRV vaccine is one needle that helps protect against four serious and contagious viral infections: measles, mumps, rubella, also known as German measles, and varicella, also known as chickenpox.

What are measles, mumps, rubella and varicella?

- **Measles** is caused by a virus and is the most contagious vaccine preventable disease. It spreads easily through coughing, sneezing and even talking. Symptoms usually start with fever, runny nose, cough and red eyes, followed by a red rash that appears around the face and spreads to the chest, arms and legs. Measles can cause ear infections, pneumonia and swelling of the brain called encephalitis, which can lead to seizures, deafness, mental disabilities and even death.
- **Mumps** is a viral infection of the salivary glands that spreads through coughing, sneezing and close face-to-face contact. It can cause fever, headache and swelling of the salivary glands underneath the jaw bone. Mumps can lead to deafness and meningitis, which is an inflammation of the fluid and lining covering the brain and spinal cord. Mumps can also cause painful, swollen testicles in teenage boys or men and a painful infection of the ovaries in women.
- **Rubella / German measles** is caused by a virus that spreads through coughing, sneezing and close face-to-face contact. It usually starts with a low fever and mild cold symptoms, followed by a rash, and swelling of the glands in the neck. Rubella is usually a mild illness in children but can be more severe in teenagers and adults, who may suffer from aches, pains and swelling in the joints. It can be followed by chronic arthritis and can also cause temporary blood clotting problems and swelling of the brain, called encephalitis. If a woman gets rubella during the first 20 weeks, her baby may be born with birth defects that can include heart disease, cataracts, deafness and mental disabilities.
- **Varicella / Chickenpox** is a highly contagious infection caused by the varicella-zoster virus. This is the same virus that can resurface later in life as “shingles.” It occurs most commonly in children but can also affect adolescents and adults. Chickenpox usually begins with a fever, headache, aches and pains, followed in a day or two by an itchy rash with red spots that turn into fluid-filled blisters then scab over. It is most contagious one or two days before the rash appears. Chickenpox spreads through coughing and sneezing or from touching the sores / blisters of infected people or any article that has touched the sores, e.g. tissues or clothing.

Who should get the publicly funded (free) MMRV vaccine?

- One dose of MMRV vaccine is routinely given at 4-6 years of age to provide children with their second doses of MMR and varicella vaccine.
- It may be given to children under 13 years of age if they are previously unvaccinated.

Who should not get the MMRV?

- Anyone who has had a serious allergic reaction to this vaccine in the past, or to any component of the vaccine:
 - **Priorix-Tetra™** - live attenuated measles, mumps, rubella and varicella virus, egg protein, MRC-5 human diploid cells, amino acids, lactose, mannitol, neomycin sulphate and sorbitol. **May contain latex.**
 - **ProQuad** - live attenuated measles, mumps, rubella and varicella virus, sucrose, hydrolyzed gelatin, urea, sodium chloride, sorbitol, monosodium L-glutamate, sodium phosphate, recombinant human albumin, sodium bicarbonate, potassium phosphate, potassium chloride, MRC-5 cells including DNA and protein, neomycin, bovine serum albumin. Does **not** contain latex.

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Who should not get the MMRV? (cont'd)

- Anyone with
 - blood disorders or cancers affecting the bone marrow, blood or lymph system
 - active untreated tuberculosis
 - an impaired immune response / on medication that lowers the body's ability to fight infections
- Anyone who
 - is 13 years of age or older.
 - is pregnant or could be pregnant.
 - recently received any blood product.
 - has received a live vaccine in the last month.
 - has received an MMR or varicella vaccine in the past 3 months (minimum interval 6 wks).
 - has a personal family history (sibling or parent) of febrile seizures.
- Anyone with a high fever or moderate to severe illness should wait until they feel well.

What are the common side effects of this vaccine?

- Some people may feel sore and swollen where the needle was given; have general muscle aches, fever, and feel tired for a day or two; or develop a light rash up to 26 days later.
- **If a rash appears, please inform Public Health at 613-966-5500.**
- A few people experience mild joint pain and swelling 1 to 3 weeks afterwards, but it usually only lasts a few days.
- Tylenol® or ibuprofen may be taken afterwards, as directed, to reduce discomfort or fever.
- **Children under 19 years of age must not be given ASA, Aspirin® or salicylates.**

What else do I need to know?

- Pregnancy should be delayed for **at least 4 weeks** after receiving MMRV immunization.
- The Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014 requires all children entering daycare to provide proof of immunization, according to the Publicly Funded Immunization Schedule for Ontario.
- The Immunization of School Pupils Act requires all students between the ages of 4 to 17 to be immunized according to Ontario's Immunization Schedule, unless a valid Statement of Medical Exemption or Conscience or Religious Belief is on file with public health.

When should I seek medical attention after immunization?

- If your child experiences any unusual side effects, seek medical attention and notify us.
- Call 911 or go to Emergency at a hospital right away if your child has any of the following after immunization:
 - swelling of the face and neck
 - problems breathing
 - hives and itchy, reddened skin

Your Record of Protection

After you receive any immunization, make sure your health care provider updates your personal immunization record. Keep it in a safe place. Please inform us of any immunizations not received from public health.

Other questions? Talk to your health care provider or call our Immunization Program at 613-966-5500
Toll Free 1-800-267-2803 | TTY: 711

We are committed to providing accessible publications, programs and services to all. For assistance, please call 613-966-5500; TTY: 711; or email accessibility@hpeph.ca. For more information, visit www.hpepublichealth.ca.