



PROTECTION FROM MEASLES, MUMPS, RUBELLA & VARICELLA (MMR-Var)

What is Measles?

Measles is a serious childhood disease. It begins like a common cold with fever, cough, runny nose and watery eyes. A red blotchy rash appears 3-7 days later and fades away after several days. Measles can cause serious complications such as pneumonia and ear infections, which may result in deafness and encephalitis (inflammation of the brain). Death from measles occurs one in every 3,000 cases.

What is Mumps?

Mumps is a mild childhood disease causing swelling of the salivary glands and cheeks making chewing and swallowing difficult. It may also be accompanied by fever, headache, and earache. Mumps can also cause meningitis encephalitis (inflammation of the brain) and deafness. Females may develop inflammation of the ovaries; males may develop inflammation of the testes. While these complications can be painful they usually do not cause sterility.

What is Rubella (German measles)?

Rubella is a mild disease causing slight fever, rash and swelling of the glands in the back of the neck lasting about 3 days. Adult females may have pain and swelling of the joints lasting one or two weeks. If a pregnant woman gets rubella the unborn child can be seriously affected. If exposed to rubella during the first 3 months of pregnancy the child may be born with heart problems, deafness or blindness.

What is Varicella (Chickenpox)?

Chickenpox is an illness that often affects children causing an itchy blister like rash. People have the rash for several days and most recover without any specific treatment. Some people have more serious symptoms and may require hospitalization.

Vaccination against Measles, Mumps, Rubella & Varicella

Measles, mumps, rubella and varicella (chickenpox) can be prevented by receiving two doses of vaccine. The MMR-Var vaccine is usually given at 12 and 18 months of age. Currently the MMR-Var vaccine can be given to older children up to 12 years of age to protect them from these four diseases.

Reactions or Side Effects from MMR-Var Vaccine

While some people have no side effects after immunization, some possible reactions include the following:

- Soreness, redness, swelling at the site of the injection
- Rash resembling chickenpox (fewer than 10 spots) at or near the injection site
- Fever can occur 5-12 days **after** immunization and fever medication may be required.

Some people should not receive the MMR-Var vaccine. If you/your child has any of the following please check with the doctor or public/community health nurse:

- Sick with fever or infection
- Allergic reaction (hives, swelling of the face, lips or throat; wheezing; shock; anaphylaxis) to

neomycin or to a previous dose of MMR, Var or MMR-Var vaccine

- Cancer, leukemia, lymphomas (cautions if there is close contact with someone who is having treatment or is immunocompromised)
- Receiving treatment with steroids
- Recently received immune globulin (IG) or other blood products
- Pregnancy

**For additional information and services
contact your Regional Health Authority
listed in the white pages of your
telephone book.**

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