

Important Information about **Measles, Mumps and Rubella Diseases** and **Measles, Mumps and Rubella (MMR) Vaccine**

PLEASE READ THIS CAREFULLY

What is MEASLES?

- It is a common childhood disease, which may also affect adults.
- It causes 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 encephalitis (inflammation of the brain) which occurs in about one case in 1,000 people and may result in convulsions, mental retardation or deafness.
- It can be a life-threatening disease.
- It is preventable by immunization.

What is MUMPS?

- It is a common childhood disease, which may also affect adults.
- It causes fever, headache and inflammation of the salivary glands. This causes the cheeks to swell.
- It may cause a mild inflammation of the covering of the brain and spinal cord (meningitis).
- It may also cause encephalitis (inflammation of the brain).
- It can cause deafness.
- It may cause painful inflammation, and swelling of the testicles or abdominal pain.
- It is preventable by immunization.

What is RUBELLA?

- It is a common childhood disease, which may also affect adults.
- It is also called German measles.
- It can cause encephalitis (inflammation of the brain).
- It causes a slight 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 deformities of the unborn child, if rubella occurs during pregnancy.
- It is preventable by immunization.

What is MMR Vaccine?

- MMR vaccine contains a tiny amount of live virus that is specially treated so that it won't cause the disease in healthy people.
- Immunization with MMR vaccine is the best way to prevent measles, mumps and rubella.
- MMR vaccine is three vaccines combined into a single immunization.
- The vaccine is given by injection.
- The vaccine is very effective in preventing measles, mumps and rubella.
- Ninety percent or more of the people who receive the vaccine will have full protection, probably for life.
- The remaining 10% who are not fully protected after receiving the vaccine may get the disease if exposure occurs, but the illness will be milder. The booster at 4 to 6 years will provide protection for most of these children.

Who should receive the MMR Vaccine?

- The Nova Scotia schedule recommends this vaccine be given at age 12 months with a booster at 4 to 6 years.

CAUTION

SOME PEOPLE SHOULD CHECK WITH A HEALTH CARE PROVIDER BEFORE THEY RECEIVE THIS VACCINE.

- People who have had a serious allergic reaction to the drug neomycin or gelatin.
- People who are taking high doses of oral steroids, or undergoing treatment for cancer.

Who Should NOT Receive MMR Vaccine

- Anyone who has received gamma globulin within the preceding 3 months.
- This vaccine is not recommended for pregnant women. If a woman wishes to get any of these vaccines, she should ideally wait at least 1 month before getting pregnant.
- People who have had a serious allergic reaction to a previous dose of MMR vaccine.
- MMR and Varicella vaccines can be given at the same time. If not given on the same day there should be 4 weeks between receiving each vaccine.

Please read other side.

What to Expect Following Immunization with Measles, Mumps and Rubella (MMR) Vaccine

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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.

Possible Side Effects from the Vaccine

- Common side effects include:
 - Burning and/or stinging at the injection site at the time of the vaccination. This will last for only a short time.
 - A rash, sore throat and headache may occur about 5-12 days after the vaccination, which may last 1-2 days.
 - Fever may occur about 5-12 days after the vaccination which may last for 1-2 days.
 - Rarely, pain and/or swelling of the testicle(s) may occur.

As fever may occur, make sure you have acetaminophen or ibuprofen at home. Follow the instructions that come with the product. These medications should not be taken if you have certain medical conditions. Talk to your health care provider about your medical history before using either of these medications.

Fever Management

A fever is not necessarily bad but may make your child uncomfortable.

If you think your child has a fever:

- Take your child's temperature.
- If temperature is over 38.5°C (101°F) you may give your child an antipyretic medicine that will help control the fever; such as acetaminophen or ibuprofen.
- You may wish to ask your health care provider or pharmacist which form of medicine is best for your child according to age, and weight and how to give the medicine to your child.
- Give the correct dose for your child's age (or weight if less than 2 years of age) every four to six hours and NOT more often.
- Encourage extra fluids—breast milk, formula and/or water.

Call Your Health Care Provider If:

- The fever lasts longer than 24 hours.
- Your child has a temperature of 39.5°C (103°F) or greater.
- The fever does not come down after acetaminophen or ibuprofen is given.
- Your child has convulsions.
- Your child appears ill with other symptoms.

NOTE:

Acetaminophen and ibuprofen come in 3 forms for young children:

- Drops - which MUST be given with the dropper provided with the brand of medicine.
- Liquid - given using a teaspoon or a 5ml measure.
- Chewable tablet - can be given to children old enough to chew and swallow food when asked.

QUESTIONS:

If you have any questions regarding measles, mumps, or rubella or the MMR vaccine, please call your local Public Health Services office, or your health care provider.

For more information on immunization, please visit the websites of

- the Canadian Coalition for Immunization Awareness at www.immunize.cpha.ca
- the Public Health Agency of Canada at www.phac-aspc.gc.ca
- the Canadian Pediatric Society at www.cps.ca