



Measles, Mumps, and Rubella (MMR)

What is MMR Vaccine?

The MMR vaccine is a safe and effective way to keep you and your child from getting very sick from the real disease. It is approved by Health Canada. The MMR vaccine (shot) is made with a tiny amount of weakened germs that do not cause disease. Vaccines help the immune system learn how to protect itself against the real disease.

Are these diseases serious?

Measles (rubeola), also known as “red measles”, is a virus that causes blotchy red rash, fever, cough, runny nose, and red, watery eyes. In some cases measles can cause swelling of the brain leading to seizures, hearing loss, or even death.

Mumps is a virus that causes painful swelling of the cheeks and neck, fever, dry mouth, headache, earache, fatigue, sore muscles, loss of appetite, and trouble talking, chewing, or swallowing. Mumps can also cause deafness, meningitis, and infections of the testicles or ovaries.

Rubella, also known as “German measles”, is a virus that causes rash and low grade fever, swelling of the lymph nodes, and achy joints and muscles.

Rubella infection in pregnant women can lead to miscarriage and malformation of the unborn baby.

The best way to protect against measles, mumps, and rubella is to get a MMR vaccine. All children 12 months and over, and all adults born on or after 1970 should get this vaccine. Children 12 months to 12 years may receive the MMRV vaccine instead.

How are these diseases spread?

These viruses spread easily through the air when an infected person coughs or sneezes. You become infected when you breathe in air or touch a surface contaminated with the virus. These viruses can also be spread through contact with an infected person’s saliva, such as:

- Kissing,
- Sharing food and drinks,
- Sharing cigarettes, or
- Sharing toys.



Why should you get the MMR vaccine?

Immunization is the best way to protect against measles, mumps, and rubella.

When you are immunized you also help protect others, as someone who is immunized is less likely to spread infection.

When pregnant women and those around her are immunized the fetus and newborn baby are better protected from infection.

What are possible reactions to the MMR vaccine?

Vaccines, like any medicine, can have side effects. Most people who get the MMR vaccine do not have any reactions.

Possible signs of reactions to the vaccine include:

- Soreness,
- Redness, and
- Swelling where the vaccine was given.

7-12 days after getting the vaccine some people may have:

- Fever,
- Rash that looks like measles,
- Swelling of the glands in cheek and neck,
- Temporary joint pain may also occur in teenage and adult women.

Rare signs include:

- Bleeding problems,
- Inflammation of the brain, and
- High fever with seizures.

Who should NOT get the MMR vaccine?

Speak to your health care provider.

Acetaminophen (Tylenol® and Tempra®) can be given for fever or soreness.

ASA (Aspirin®) should **NEVER** be given to children because it can cause a severe liver and brain disease called Reye's Syndrome.

It is important to stay in the clinic for 15 minutes after getting any vaccine because there is a rare possibility of a severe allergic reaction. This can include: hives, difficulty breathing, or swelling of the throat, tongue or lips.

If this happens after you leave the clinic, call or go to the nearest Emergency Department or your local health centre for immediate treatment.

Report any serious or unexpected side-effects to your public health nurse.

Who should get the MMR vaccine?

MMR is given according to the following schedule:

SCHEDULE FOR CHILDREN (17 or under)						
Vaccine	Age					
	Birth	1-11 mos.	12 mos.	2 years	3 years	4-17 years
MMR or as MMRV*			✓		✓	

* MMRV vaccine can only be given to those 12 months to 12 years of age.

MMR is also recommended for those born in January 1970 or after who have not previously been immunized or who are susceptible to measles, mumps and rubella. MMR is offered as two doses given at least four weeks apart.

To find out more about the MMR vaccine contact your local health centre to speak to your public health nurse, or visit the following links:

- NWT Immunization Schedule:
<http://www.hss.gov.nt.ca>
- Immunize Canada:
<https://immunize.ca>
- To keep track of your family's immunizations on your smart phone or tablet and to receive vaccine schedule reminders please download the CANImmunize App at:
<https://www.canimmunize.ca>

Your local health care centre is located at the address below.

Place Health Centre
contact information
here.