

Measles, Mumps, Rubella (MMR) Vaccine

Immunization protects you from disease. Get protected, get immunized.

- Vaccines make your immune system stronger by building antibodies, which help prevent diseases.
- Immunization is safe. It is much safer to get immunized than to get these diseases.

Who should have MMR vaccine?

This vaccine is given to children starting at 12 months of age who are not getting MMR-Var (MMR and chickenpox vaccine together).

It is given to infants 6 to 11 months of age who have certain health conditions or are travelling to areas with measles outbreaks.

Adults and children whose immunization records do not show the recommended number of doses of measles, mumps, or rubella vaccines are given this vaccine.

The vaccine may be offered to people who need to be re-immunized because of a bone marrow transplant.

How many doses of this vaccine are needed?

Children are usually given MMR combined with chickenpox vaccine (MMR-Var). If MMR vaccine is used, they need 2 doses, which are usually given at 12 months and between 4 and 6 years of age.

Doses given before 12 months of age do not count.

Adults born in 1970 or later and healthcare workers of any age need at least:

- 2 doses of measles containing vaccine
- 2 doses of mumps containing vaccine
- 1 dose of rubella containing vaccine

Adults born before 1970:

- Post-secondary students need 1 dose of measles and 1 dose of mumps containing vaccine.
- Travellers to measles risk areas need 1 dose of measles containing vaccine.
- Child daycare workers, women planning a pregnancy, and adults with certain health conditions need 1 dose of rubella containing vaccine.

How well does the vaccine work?

After 1 dose, protection is about:

- 85% to 95% for measles (2 doses: almost 100%)
- 62% to 91% for mumps (2 doses: 76% to 95%)
- over 95% for rubella

Where can I get the vaccine?

The vaccine is given at a public health office in your area.

Are there side effects from MMR vaccine?

Reactions to the vaccine are usually mild and go away in a few days. Reactions may happen up to 1 month after immunization. They may include:

- redness, swelling, and discomfort where the needle was given
- fever
- body or joint aches
- feeling irritable
- measles-like rash (blotchy red)

It is important to stay at the clinic for 15 minutes after immunization because people can have a rare but serious allergic reaction (anaphylaxis).

Unusual reactions can happen after being immunized. Call Health Link at 811 to report any unusual reactions.

How can I manage side effects?

- To help with discomfort and swelling, put a cool, wet cloth over the area.
- If you need fever or pain medicine, check with your pharmacist or doctor. Do not give aspirin to anyone younger than 19 years old because it can cause serious health problems.
- Some people with health problems (e.g., weak immune system) must call their doctor whenever they get a fever. If you have been told to do this, call your doctor—even if you think the fever was due to immunization.
- The measles-like rash that may occur after immunization is not contagious.

Is there anyone who cannot have MMR vaccine?

You may not be able to have the vaccine if you:

- have an allergy to parts of the vaccine—always tell your healthcare provider about allergies.
- had a severe or unusual reaction after this vaccine (or a similar one)—always tell your healthcare provider if you have had reactions.

- are pregnant—you need to wait until after you have had your baby.
- have a weak immune system—you need to check with your doctor before getting this vaccine.
- had a blood product within the past year or another live vaccine within the past 6 weeks—check with a public health nurse as your vaccine may need to be delayed.

You can be immunized if you have a mild illness (e.g., cold), even if you have a fever.

You can be immunized if you are planning a pregnancy, but you need to wait 1 month after this vaccine before trying to get pregnant.

For More Information



Call Health Link at 811



Go to immunizealberta.ca



Go to myhealth.alberta.ca

Disease Quick Facts

Measles

- highly infectious virus that causes a high fever, blotchy rash, cough, runny nose, and red eyes
- 1 in 10 people will get infections of the middle ear or lungs
- 1 in 1000 people will get encephalitis (infection of the brain) which can lead to seizures, deafness or brain damage
- 1 to 2 of every 1000 people may die
- spread easily through the air

Mumps

- virus that causes fever, headache, and swelling of the glands around the jaw
- some people have no symptoms but can spread the disease
- can cause swelling of the testicles (boys/men) or ovaries (girls/women), deafness, or encephalitis (infection of the brain)
- spread by coughing, sneezing or contact with saliva (e.g. kissing, sharing food, sharing toys)

Rubella (German Measles)

- virus that causes fever, sore throat, swollen neck glands and red rash
- usually mild, but can cause painful, swollen joints, encephalitis (infection of the brain), or a bleeding disorder
- if a woman gets rubella while pregnant, she may have a miscarriage or the baby may be born with disabilities
- spread by coughing or sneezing