



# Measles, Mumps and Rubella (MMR) Vaccine

Getting vaccinated is the best way to protect against some very serious infections. The Canadian Paediatric Society and the National Advisory Committee on Immunization strongly recommend routine immunization. The MMR vaccine is a three-in-one needle that protects against measles, mumps and rubella (German measles). In Ontario MMR vaccine is mandatory under the Immunization of School Pupils Act, in order for children to attend school. The first dose should be given on or soon after the first birthday. Since August 2011, the second dose is recommended to be given at four to six years of age. It may be combined with the Varicella vaccine and given as MMRV. MMR vaccine should also be given to adults who are not protected against measles, mumps or rubella. Pregnant women, who have been told that they are not protected against rubella, should receive MMR vaccine as soon as they are no longer pregnant.

## What is Measles? Mumps? Rubella?

**Measles** is a serious infection. It causes high fever, cough, rash, runny nose and watery eyes. Measles lasts for one to two weeks. It can be complicated by ear infections or pneumonia in one out of every 10 children with measles. Measles can also be complicated by encephalitis, an infection of the brain, in about one out of every 1,000 children with measles. This often causes brain damage and developmental delays. Measles causes deafness in about one in 3,000 cases. In very rare cases, measles is complicated by a disease called SSPE (sub acute sclerosing panencephalitis); a very severe and always fatal brain infection. Measles can also make an unprotected pregnant woman have a miscarriage or give birth prematurely. Measles spreads very easily from person to person. It is passed from an infected person to others through coughing, sneezing and even talking. Before measles vaccine was used widely, almost all children got measles. Now, because of the routine use of vaccine, very few children get measles in Canada. SSPE has almost completely disappeared.

**Mumps** can cause fever, headaches and swelling of the glands located under the jaw, below the ears. The swelling is caused by an infection of the salivary glands. Mumps can cause meningitis, an infection of the lining of the brain and spinal cord. About one in every 10 people with mumps gets meningitis. Fortunately, mumps meningitis is usually mild. Mumps can cause deafness in

some children. Mumps can cause very painful, swollen testicles in about one out of four teenage boys or adult men. This may rarely cause sterility. Mumps can cause a painful infection of the ovaries in one out of 20 women. People can get mumps from an infected person coughing or sneezing around them or simply talking to them.

**Rubella (German measles)** is very dangerous in pregnant women. If a woman gets rubella in the early part of a pregnancy, it is very likely that her baby will be stillborn or be severely disabled. The most common disabilities are blindness, deafness, developmental delays and heart defects. Rubella is usually a mild illness in children, but can be more severe in older children and adults, especially women. Rubella may cause fever, sore throat, swollen glands in the neck and a rash on the face and neck. As many as three in five teenage girls and women with rubella get painful, swollen joints. Rubella can be followed by a chronic arthritis. It can also cause temporary blood clotting problems. Rubella spreads by contact with an infected person through coughing, sneezing or talking to them.

## How well does the vaccine protect against measles, mumps or rubella?

The vaccine protects about 99% of those who get both needles against measles. It protects 95% of people against mumps and about 98% of people against rubella. Protection from measles, mumps and rubella after getting the vaccine is probably life-long. Vaccination also makes these diseases milder for those who may catch them.

## Is the MMR vaccine safe?

Yes. Most children will have no side effects or only mild tenderness at the injection site. Some children can have fever and a mild rash occurring about six to 10 days after the needle is given. This may last for one to three days. A few will have joint pains that last a little while. One in five to eight teenage girls and adult women may get painful swelling of some joints within one to three weeks after vaccination. Joint symptoms in this older age group usually last longer than with children but are generally well tolerated and rarely interfere with normal activities.

## Who should not have MMR vaccine?

- Anyone who is ill with a fever or infection worse than cold. Postpone until feeling better
- Anyone who has had a severe allergic reaction (called anaphylaxis) to a prior dose of this vaccine.
- Anyone with immune system problems.
- Pregnant women (If a woman gets the MMR vaccine and discovers in the next three months that she is pregnant, she should notify her doctor right away).
- Anyone who is allergic to an antibiotic called neomycin.
- Anyone who received a gamma globulin shot within the past three to 12 months.

## Record of Protection

After you/your child receive any vaccination, make sure the doctor/nurse updates your copy of the vaccination record card. In addition, please report the vaccination to the *Haldimand-Norfolk Health Unit*. You can update the record on line at [www.hnhu.org](http://www.hnhu.org) or by contacting a member of the Vaccine Preventable Disease Team at 519-426-6170 or 905-318-6623 or by fax at 519-426-4767.

## Schedule for Secondary School Immunization Clinics 2013

Dunnville Secondary School	Wednesday, February 13, 2013 – 9:00 to 11:00 a.m.
Cayuga Secondary School	Wednesday, February 13, 2013 – 1:00 to 2:30 p.m.
Holy Trinity Catholic High School	Thursday, February 14, 2013 – 9:00 to 11:00 a.m.
McKinnon Park Secondary School	Tuesday, February 19, 2013 – 9:00 to 11:00 a.m.
Hagersville Secondary School	Tuesday, February 19, 2013 – 1:00 to 2:30 p.m.
Valley Heights Secondary School	Wednesday, February 20, 2013 – 9:00 to 11:30 a.m.
Delhi District Secondary School	Wednesday, February 20, 2013 – 1:00 to 2:30 p.m.
Simcoe Composite School	Thursday, February 21, 2013 – 9:00 to 11:00 a.m.
Waterford District High School	Thursday, February 21, 2013 – 1:00 to 2:30 p.m.

The Health Unit does not have complete immunization records for some students. These students have been notified by letter and will only be vaccinated at the school immunization clinic if, either before, or on the day of the school clinic, they can provide the Health Unit with a full written history of all childhood vaccines they have received.

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