

# MMRV Vaccine (Measles, Mumps, Rubella, and Varicella): *What You Need to Know*

Many Vaccine Information Statements are available in Spanish and other languages. See [www.immunize.org/vis](http://www.immunize.org/vis)

Hojas de información sobre vacunas están disponibles en español y en muchos otros idiomas. Visite [www.immunize.org/vis](http://www.immunize.org/vis)

## 1 Why get vaccinated?

MMRV vaccine can prevent **measles, mumps, rubella, and varicella.**

- **MEASLES (M)** can cause fever, cough, runny nose, and red, watery eyes, commonly followed by a rash that covers the whole body. It can lead to seizures (often associated with fever), ear infections, diarrhea, and pneumonia. Rarely, measles can cause brain damage or death.
- **MUMPS (M)** can cause fever, headache, muscle aches, tiredness, loss of appetite, and swollen and tender salivary glands under the ears. It can lead to deafness, swelling of the brain and/or spinal cord covering, painful swelling of the testicles or ovaries, and, very rarely, death.
- **RUBELLA (R)** can cause fever, sore throat, rash, headache, and eye irritation. It can cause arthritis in up to half of teenage and adult women. If a woman gets rubella while she is pregnant, she could have a miscarriage or her baby could be born with serious birth defects.
- **VARICELLA (V)**, also called chickenpox, can cause an itchy rash, in addition to fever, tiredness, loss of appetite, and headache. It can lead to skin infections, pneumonia, inflammation of the blood vessels, swelling of the brain and/or spinal cord covering, and infection of the blood, bones, or joints. Some people who get chickenpox get a painful rash called shingles (also known as herpes zoster) years later.

Most people who are vaccinated with MMRV will be protected for life. Vaccines and high rates of vaccination have made these diseases much less common in the United States.

## 2 MMRV vaccine

MMRV vaccine may be given to **children 12 months through 12 years of age**, usually:

- First dose at 12 through 15 months of age
- Second dose at 4 through 6 years of age

MMRV vaccine may be given at the same time as other vaccines. Instead of MMRV, some children might receive separate shots for MMR (measles, mumps, and rubella) and varicella. Your health care provider can give you more information.

## 3 Talk with your health care provider

Tell your vaccine provider if the person getting the vaccine:

- Has had an **allergic reaction after a previous dose of MMRV, MMR, or varicella vaccine**, or has any **severe, life-threatening allergies.**
- Is **pregnant**, or thinks she might be pregnant.
- Has a **weakened immune system**, or has a **parent, brother, or sister with a history of hereditary or congenital immune system problems.**
- Has ever had a **condition that makes him or her bruise or bleed easily.**
- Has a **history of seizures**, or has a **parent, brother, or sister with a history of seizures.**
- Is **taking, or plans to take salicylates** (such as aspirin).
- Has recently **had a blood transfusion or received other blood products.**
- Has **tuberculosis.**
- Has **gotten any other vaccines in the past 4 weeks.**

In some cases, your health care provider may decide to postpone MMRV vaccination to a future visit, or may recommend that the child receive separate MMR and varicella vaccines instead of MMRV.



People with minor illnesses, such as a cold, may be vaccinated. Children who are moderately or severely ill should usually wait until they recover before getting MMRV vaccine.

Your health care provider can give you more information.

## 4 Risks of a vaccine reaction

- Soreness, redness, or rash where the shot is given can happen after MMRV vaccine.
- Fever or swelling of the glands in the cheeks or neck sometimes occur after MMRV vaccine.
- Seizures, often associated with fever, can happen after MMRV vaccine. The risk of seizures is higher after MMRV than after separate MMR and varicella vaccines when given as the first dose of the series in younger children. Your health care provider can advise you about the appropriate vaccines for your child.
- More serious reactions happen rarely. These can include pneumonia, swelling of the brain and/or spinal cord covering, or temporary low platelet count which can cause unusual bleeding or bruising.
- In people with serious immune system problems, this vaccine may cause an infection which may be life-threatening. People with serious immune system problems should not get MMRV vaccine.

It is possible for a vaccinated person to develop a rash. If this happens, it could be related to the varicella component of the vaccine, and the varicella vaccine virus could be spread to an unprotected person. Anyone who gets a rash should stay away from people with a weakened immune system and infants until the rash goes away. Talk with your health care provider to learn more.

Some people who are vaccinated against chickenpox get shingles (herpes zoster) years later. This is much less common after vaccination than after chickenpox disease.

People sometimes faint after medical procedures, including vaccination. Tell your provider if you feel dizzy or have vision changes or ringing in the ears.

As with any medicine, there is a very remote chance of a vaccine causing a severe allergic reaction, other serious injury, or death.

## 5 What if there is a serious problem?

An allergic reaction could occur after the vaccinated person leaves the clinic. If you see signs of a severe allergic reaction (hives, swelling of the face and throat, difficulty breathing, a fast heartbeat, dizziness, or weakness), call **9-1-1** and get the person to the nearest hospital.

For other signs that concern you, call your health care provider.

Adverse reactions should be reported to the Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System (VAERS). Your health care provider will usually file this report, or you can do it yourself. Visit the VAERS website at [www.vaers.hhs.gov](http://www.vaers.hhs.gov) or call **1-800-822-7967**. *VAERS is only for reporting reactions, and VAERS staff do not give medical advice.*

## 6 The National Vaccine Injury Compensation Program

The National Vaccine Injury Compensation Program (VICP) is a federal program that was created to compensate people who may have been injured by certain vaccines. Visit the VICP website at [www.hrsa.gov/vaccinecompensation](http://www.hrsa.gov/vaccinecompensation) or call **1-800-338-2382** to learn about the program and about filing a claim. There is a time limit to file a claim for compensation.

## 7 How can I learn more?

- Ask your healthcare provider.
- Call your local or state health department.
- Contact the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC):
  - Call **1-800-232-4636 (1-800-CDC-INFO)** or
  - Visit CDC's [www.cdc.gov/vaccines](http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines)

Vaccine Information Statement (Interim)  
**MMRV Vaccine**



Office use only