

# Measles, Mumps, Rubella (MMR) Vaccine

## What is MMR?

MMR is a vaccine to protect against 3 diseases: measles, mumps and rubella (German measles).

It should be given to children soon after their 1<sup>st</sup> birthday. A 2<sup>nd</sup> shot must be given so a child can attend school in Ontario. The 2<sup>nd</sup> shot should be given 6-months after the first dose.

MMR can be given to adults.

The MMR vaccine protects over 95% of all children.

## Measles

Measles is a serious, very contagious disease. It is spread when an infected person coughs or sneezes or from freshly soiled bedding or clothing.

You can spot measles by:

- small, red dots on the skin
- coughing
- runny nose
- light bothers the eyes

Seven to 18 days after exposure to measles a fever, drowsiness, irritability, red eyes, sneezing and runny nose appear. Coughing and swelling of the neck glands often follow. White spots appear on the inside of the mouth and throat. Red spots appear on face, neck, upper chest and arms and legs a few days later. After 2-3 days, the rash fades and the fever drops. Skin may peel and you may have an earache.

There is no medicine for measles. If someone is ill, stay away from others, and rest in bed. Treat with cough syrup and skin lotions to lessen fever, coughing and itching.

Usually, you get measles once.

## Mumps

Mumps can cause a fever, chills, headache and swollen face. It can affect children and adults who have not had mumps or a shot to protect them. Usually, you get mumps once.

Mumps can cause deafness and can cause painful swelling of the testicles in teen boys and men, and may cause them to be sterile. Mumps can cause a painful infection of ovaries in women.

It takes 12-25 days before signs show.

Mumps can be passed to others for about a week before signs show and about 9 days after. Mumps can be spread when an infected person coughs or sneezes, through saliva, sharing drinks, kissing or touching things like hands of an infected person, touching telephones or tissue that an infected person used and then touching eyes, nose or mouth.

If someone has mumps, they should stay away from others, and get plenty of rest. Rest, ice-packs or heat packs and acetaminophen (Tylenol) may offer comfort.

**DO NOT** give Aspirin™ (ASA) to children or teens with a viral illness.

...More



## COMMUNITY HEALTH SERVICES DEPARTMENT

Environmental Health & Prevention Services  
160 Exmouth Street  
Point Edward, Ontario N7T 7Z6  
Telephone: 519 383-8331  
Toll free: 1-800-667-1839  
Fax: 519 383-7092  
Email: [chsd@county-lambton.on.ca](mailto:chsd@county-lambton.on.ca)  
[www.lambtonhealth.on.ca](http://www.lambtonhealth.on.ca)

## Rubella

Rubella is also called German measles. It is caused by a mild virus but is very **dangerous** for pregnant women. If a pregnant woman gets rubella during the first 3 months of pregnancy, her baby risks serious birth defects like blindness and brain damage or death.

Rubella is a mild illness in children but can be much worse for teens and adults. It can cause a fever, sore throat and swollen glands.

Symptoms of rubella may include:

- rash (starts on face, becomes generalized in 24 hours; lasts about 3 days)
- slight fever
- sore joints
- headaches
- discomfort
- runny nose
- red eyes

The rash first appears on the face and spreads from head to toe. Glands behind the ears and at the back of the neck may swell, causing soreness and pain.

Many people have few or no symptoms. About half of the people who have the disease get a rash.

It can be spread when an infected person coughs or sneezes. You can also catch it by contact with nose or throat fluids of an infected person.

Rubella can be passed to others 7 days before a rash shows and up to 5 days after the rash.

## Who should **NOT** have an MMR vaccine?

- Pregnant women
- Those taking certain medicines
- Anyone who is ill with a fever, infection or illness worse than a cold should wait until they recover
- Allergies to any component of the vaccine
- People who received a live virus vaccine (e.g. chickenpox vaccine) less than 28 days ago

## Call your doctor if your child has:

- high fever
- rash
- serious problems

Side effects are mild and may be soreness or redness at the site of injection, a slight fever for 1-2 days or a rash that lasts 2 weeks.

A severe allergic reaction, although rare, may happen following the use of this or any vaccine. That is why it is necessary to remain in the building for at least 15 minutes after receiving your injection.

## Caution

If you are allergic to eggs and get hives, wheezing, trouble breathing or if your face swells after eating eggs, tell the nurse before you get your shot.

## Questions?

If you have any questions about the MMR vaccine, talk with your doctor or call the County of Lambton Community Health Services Department at 519 383-8331 or toll free 1-800-667-1839.

Any serious reaction to vaccines should be reported to the family doctor and to Community Health Services.

Always make sure the doctor or nurse updates your yellow Immunization Record card, and keep it in a safe place. You can call Community Health Services at 519-383-8331 or toll free 1-800-667-1839 to update your family's immunization record when you have a vaccine at your doctor, or elsewhere.