



MMR Vaccine

Measles, Mumps and Rubella

What is the MMR vaccine?

The **MMR vaccine** is part of the routine Yukon Children's Immunization Program. The MMR vaccine is a live, weakened combined vaccine that protects against three serious and highly contagious viral infections - measles, mumps and rubella. The vaccine works by stimulating the body's immune system to produce antibodies against these diseases. It is given as a two-dose series. The first dose is offered to children at one year of age and again before kindergarten.

Why is the MMR vaccine important?

- **Measles** spreads easily and can cause lung infections, brain swelling, and, in rare cases, death.
- **Mumps** can cause hearing loss, brain swelling, and painful swelling in the testicles or ovaries.
- **Rubella** is dangerous during pregnancy and can cause birth defects or miscarriage.

Two doses of the MMR vaccine are almost 100% effective at preventing these diseases.

Who should get the MMR vaccine?

- Yukon children get the MMR vaccine at 12 months and again between ages 4 to 6.
- Older children and adults who missed these vaccines can still get two doses.
- Most individuals born before 1970 are already immune and do not need the vaccine.

Who should not get the MMR vaccine?

- Anyone who has had a serious allergic reaction to a previous dose or to any part of the vaccine.
- People who are pregnant.
- People with very weak immune systems (such as those with HIV or on cancer treatment) should talk to a health care provider first.

What are the side effects?

MMR vaccines are safe, but like all vaccines, reactions may occur.

Some common reactions include:

- redness;
- tenderness and swelling at the injection site;
- fever; and
- rash.

Mild reactions can be relieved by applying a cold/damp compress to the site, administering a pain-relieving medication such as acetaminophen if needed.

Rare but serious reactions such as anaphylaxis can occur after immunizations. Talk to your health care provider if your symptoms are severe or last longer than expected.