



# **Yukon School Immunization Program**

## **Grade 6**

February 2025



## Read before you proceed

- **Read** the information in this booklet carefully.
- **Complete, sign and return** the Immunization Consent Form that came with this booklet.
- Return the signed form even if you **DO NOT** want your child to receive any vaccines.

## Need more information?

- If you have questions about this booklet or need clarification, contact your local health centre.
- For Yukon's Immunization Schedule, visit [yukonimmunization.ca](http://yukonimmunization.ca) or contact your local health centre.
- For additional information on immunization, visit:
  - Yukon Immunize: [yukonimmunization.ca](http://yukonimmunization.ca)
  - Immunize Canada: [immunize.ca](http://immunize.ca)
  - Government of Canada: [canada.ca/en/public-health/topics/immunization-vaccines.html](http://canada.ca/en/public-health/topics/immunization-vaccines.html)

**Remember, when in doubt, ask!**

# The School Immunization Program

Each school year, community health nurses offer Grade 6 students vaccines to protect against serious diseases. The vaccines provided include:

- **Human Papillomavirus (HPV):** provided free to children in grade 6.
- **Measles, Mumps and Rubella (MMR):** catch-up for two-dose series, if needed.

This booklet contains information on these vaccines and the diseases they prevent.

## When will my child get these vaccines?

Your child will receive these vaccines at two immunization clinics held at their school over a period of six months. Your child's school will let you know the exact dates for these clinics.

## What if my child is sick or not in school on the day of the immunization clinic?

If your child is absent or unwell on the day of the clinic, they can still receive their vaccines at your local health centre. Contact a community health nurse to make arrangements.

## What if my child is afraid of needles?

Community health nurses at school clinics are experienced in helping children who feel anxious about getting vaccinated.

- If your child has medical conditions, is extremely fearful, or has ever fainted or felt lightheaded during vaccinations, contact your local health centre.
- Nurses will work with you to create a plan to support your child.
- Do not give your child medication to relieve anxiety before vaccination.

## What if my child has already received some of these vaccines?

If your child has previously received some of these vaccines in another province or territory, provide a copy of their immunization records to your local health centre. The nurse will only administer the necessary vaccines based on your child's immunization history and only if you have checked the "YES" boxes

## Will I receive a record of the vaccines my child receives?

Yes. After your child receives the vaccines you have consented to, they will be given a record of immunization. Keep this document with their other health records, as it is important to track all vaccinations.

# Helping your child get ready for immunizations

It's normal for children to feel nervous about getting vaccinated. Here are some ways you can help make the experience easier for them:

## Make sure they know what to expect

Tell them when the clinic will be and remind them at least one day before.

## Help them work out ways to take their mind off the actual shots

Distraction—focusing on something else—is a great way to cope with discomfort.

Help your child come up with a list of things they can do before, during, and after the shot to take their mind off it.

For example, they could:

- Think of a favorite memory
- Talk with a friend
- Listen to music
- Read a book

## Be honest about to what to expect

- Never say, “It won’t hurt.” Instead, be truthful: “You might feel a small pinch and some pressure.”
- Stay calm and matter-of-fact. Your attitude helps set the tone.
- Avoid joking or teasing, such as saying they will get the “extra big” needle.
- Don’t apologize by saying, “I’m sorry you have to go through this.” Instead, reassure them that immunization is important for their health.

Information adapted from “Clinical Practice Guidelines for Pain Management during Childhood Immunizations” developed by **Help Eliminate Pain in Kids**.

# Information about the vaccines offered in the Grade 6 school immunization schedule

## 1. Human Papilloma Virus (HPV) Vaccine

### What is HPV?

Human papillomavirus (HPV) is a very common virus that spreads through sex and sexual contact, including skin-to-skin contact. Almost everyone who is sexually active will get HPV at some point in their life. In many cases, the body clears the virus on its own without any symptoms, so a person may never know they were infected.

There are over **100 different types of HPV**. While some types are harmless, others can be harmful.

HPV is responsible for:

- all genital warts; and
- virtually all cases of cervical cancer.

There is no cure for HPV, but immunization helps prevent the **nine types of HPV** that cause most cases of cervical cancer and genital warts.

### What is the HPV vaccine?

- The HPV vaccine is a single-dose vaccine offered in Grade 6.
- The vaccine does not cause HPV—it protects against the most harmful strains of the virus.

### Why is this vaccine being offered to my child now?

The Yukon Immunization Schedule recommends that all students receive the HPV vaccine in Grade 6 as part of the school immunization program.

HPV immunization is most effective when given before any sexual contact, ensuring the best protection against genital warts and cervical cancer.

## 2. Measles, Mumps, and Rubella (MMR) Vaccine

### What are Measles, Mumps and Rubella?

Measles, mumps and rubella are viral infections that spread easily through coughing and sneezing.

#### Measles

- Also known as red measles or rubeola, measles causes fever, runny nose, very red eyes and a rash on the face and upper body.
- It can lead to complications such as ear infections and pneumonia.
- In rare but severe cases, measles can cause brain inflammation (encephalitis), which may result in seizures, deafness, or permanent brain damage.
- Measles can be life-threatening.

#### Mumps

- Mumps causes fever, headache and swollen salivary glands, which can be painful and make the cheeks appear puffy.
- While complications are rare, they can include:
  - inflammation of the brain (encephalitis);
  - inflammation of the testicles or ovaries; and
  - hearing loss (deafness).

#### Rubella

- Rubella, also known as German measles, causes low-grade fever, mild cold symptoms, rash, swollen neck glands and joint pain.
- Rubella is especially dangerous for an unborn baby. It is important to ensure that your MMR immunization is complete before starting a family.

### What is the MMR vaccine?

The MMR vaccine is a combination of three vaccines given in a single injection. It protects against measles, mumps, and rubella.

It is a two-dose series, typically given:

- at one year of age; and
- between four and six years of age (before your child starts school).

### Why is this vaccine being offered to my child now?

Completing the full two-dose series is essential for protection against all three diseases. Some individuals may not have completed the series, and the nurse will review your child's immunization history to determine if they need this vaccine.

Canada has experienced outbreaks of measles and mumps in recent years. These diseases can cause serious complications, and immunization is the best way to protect your child and the community.

## Caution

**Your child should NOT receive any of these vaccines if they have had a severe allergic reaction to a previous dose.**

Before your child receives the vaccine, check with your health care provider if:

- They have problems with their immune system that makes them more vulnerable to infections.

### Possible side effects of the vaccine

- Common reactions include redness, tenderness and swelling at the injection site. Some individuals may experience fever, headache, fatigue, or digestive issues. These side effects are usually mild and last one to two days.

### Managing side effects

- Apply a cold, damp compress to the injection site.
- If necessary, give a pain reliever such as acetaminophen.
- Contact your health care provider if symptoms are severe or last longer than 48 hours.

It is important to stay at the school for 15 minutes after receiving the vaccine.

Although extremely rare (less than 1 in a million people), severe allergic reactions can occur.

If you have any concerns about side effects, contact 811 or speak with your health care provider.

