

MMRV Vaccine

Measles, Mumps, Rubella and Varicella

The MMRV vaccine is part of the routine Yukon Immunization Schedule for children.

What are Measles, Mump, Rubella and Varicella?

- **Measles** is a very contagious viral infection. It spreads through the air when an infected person coughs or sneezes. Measles can cause fever, cough, runny nose, red eyes and a rash. It can lead to serious complications, including pneumonia, swelling of the brain and death, particularly in young children and people with weakened immune systems.
- **Mumps** is a viral infection that primarily affects the salivary glands. It can cause painful swelling near the jaw and cheeks. It can also lead to complications, including meningitis, hearing loss, swelling of the testicles or ovaries and, in rare cases, brain inflammation.
- **Rubella** is a viral infection spread through respiratory droplets. It usually causes a mild fever, rash and swollen lymph nodes. Rubella can be very serious during pregnancy because it can result in miscarriage, stillbirth or serious birth defects known as congenital rubella syndrome, which includes heart defects, deafness and developmental delays.
- **Varicella (chickenpox)** is a contagious viral infection caused by the varicella-zoster virus. It spreads through respiratory droplets or direct contact with fluid from its itchy blisters. Symptoms usually include a fever, tiredness and a rash that turns into small, fluid-filled blisters. Most children recover without issues, but chickenpox can sometimes lead to skin infections, pneumonia or brain inflammation.

What is the MMRV vaccine?

The MMRV vaccine is a live, weakened combined vaccine that protects against four serious and highly contagious viral infections: measles, mumps, rubella and varicella (chickenpox). The vaccine works by stimulating the body's immune system to produce antibodies against these diseases.

Who should get the vaccine?

Children four to six years of age receive this vaccine to complete their measles, mumps, rubella and chickenpox immunization series.

Who should not get the vaccine?

Do not get the MMRV vaccine if you have had a serious allergic reaction to a previous dose or an ingredient of the vaccine. If your child has a very weak immune system, for example, from cancer treatment, speak with your health care provider first.

Possible reactions to the vaccine

Common reactions to the vaccine may include soreness, redness and swelling where the vaccine was given. A mild fever and a rash that looks like measles or chickenpox can occur about two weeks after the vaccine.

Side effects are generally easy to manage. You can apply a cold, damp compress to the injection site. If needed, a pain reliever such as acetaminophen may help. Speak with your healthcare provider if symptoms are severe or last longer than 48 hours.

After you get the vaccine

- Stay at the clinic for 15 minutes after getting the vaccine.
- Severe allergic reactions are very rare. Clinic staff are trained to treat them right away.
- If you have symptoms of a severe reaction after leaving the clinic, call 911 or your local emergency number right away.

Why are MMRV vaccines recommended?

Two doses of measles-, mumps-, rubella- and varicella-containing vaccines provide very high protection against these diseases. For example, two doses of measles vaccine are about 97 per cent effective, and two doses of varicella vaccine are highly effective at preventing moderate to severe illness.

The combined MMRV vaccine is safe, well-studied and one of the most effective ways to prevent these infections. Getting your child immunized not only protects them but also helps protect others in your community, especially those who cannot be vaccinated or are more vulnerable to serious illness.