

Varicella (Chickenpox) Var Vaccine



Don't Wait, Vaccinate!

This vaccine protects children against varicella (chickenpox) and its complications.

	Varicella symptoms:	Possible complications:
Diseases	Fever Many small blisters (from a few to 500 – that develop scabs) Itching Flu-like symptoms (chills, mild headache, muscle/joint ache and fatigue)	Ear infections Pneumonia Secondary infections (such as skin – impetigo; and possibly severe – flesh-eating disease) Encephalitis (brain infection) Malformations in infants (when mother infected in pregnancy) Shingles (15-30% over lifetime) Death

The vaccine is recommended for 15 month olds, but can be given to older children who did not get it as a toddler. Babies who had chickenpox before their first birthday should also be immunized. A second booster dose is recommended and is usually given at 4-6 years of age in a vaccine combining protection against measles, mumps, rubella, and varicella.

The varicella vaccine is safe. In most cases it does not cause any undesirable reactions. The varicella vaccine should not be given if the person:

- Is pregnant (should wait for one month after getting the vaccine before getting pregnant)
- Has a weak immune system (must check with doctor first)
- Has had another injectable or nasally administered live vaccine (e.g. MMR, BCG or Yellow Fever) in the last 28 days
- Has had a blood product (blood or plasma transfusion, or serum immunoglobulin) in the last 90 days
- Has untreated tuberculosis (Varivax®III only)
- Had an allergic reaction to a varicella vaccine in the past

	Possible side effects:	What to do:
Vaccine	Swelling, redness, tenderness and/or a rash at the injection site.	Apply a cold, damp cloth to the area.
	Some children may get a very mild case of chicken pox one or two weeks after they get the vaccine but are not likely to be contagious.	Avoid contact with newborns and those with weakened immune system while the lesions are present.
	A slight fever (38°C) may occur (10-20% of cases).	See a health care provider if you are concerned about symptoms.
	Severe allergic reactions are very rare. Most severe reactions occur shortly after receiving the vaccine.	It is important to wait 15 minutes after the injection for observation before leaving the clinic. Seek immediate medical attention if experiencing a severe reaction.

For more information go to:

www.immunize.ca

www.healthcanada.gc.ca/vaccinate

www.health.gov.on.ca/en/pro/programs/immunization

<https://www.canada.ca/en/indigenous-services-canada/services/first-nations-inuit-health/family-health/immunization.html>