

Measles Vaccine Guidance

Update to York Region health care professionals as of March 11, 2024

As measles cases continue to rise across Canada, immunization against measles is the most effective way to prevent infection and mitigate its impact. In light of recent measles activity in York Region and across Canada, please see the vaccine guidance below.

What are the available measles-containing vaccines?

- There are two measles-containing vaccines available in Canada: Measles-Mumps-Rubella (MMR) vaccine and Measles-Mumps-Rubella-Varicella (MMRV) vaccine
- The minimum interval between doses is 28 days. Doses must also be separated from any other live attenuated vaccine by at least 28 days
- MMRV vaccine is publicly funded in Ontario for children four to 12 years of age. (MMRV given as the first dose to children 12-23 months of age leads to a slightly higher risk of fever and febrile seizure post-vaccination)

When are measles vaccines given in Ontario?

The current priority for measles vaccination in Ontario continues to be the routine vaccination of children according to [Ontario's Routine Immunization Schedule](#). Two doses of measles-containing vaccine are given: the first dose is given after 12 months of age using the MMR vaccine and the second dose is given at four to six years of age using the MMRV vaccine.

What is the measles vaccine guidance for different age groups?

Age Group	Measles Vaccine Guidance
Infants under six months	A vaccine is not authorized in this age group.
Infants six to 11 months	One dose of MMR vaccine may be given if the infant is travelling outside of Canada. Note: Two additional doses of measles-containing vaccine must be administered after 12 months of age to ensure long-lasting immunity to measles.
Children 12 months-18 years of age	Two doses of measles-containing vaccine at least 28 days apart.

Age Group	Measles Vaccine Guidance
	<p>Note: At the discretion of the health care professional, a second dose of MMR vaccine can be administered as early as 18 months of age (and at least 28 days after the first dose).</p> <p>If the second dose of MMR vaccine is given earlier than the routine immunization schedule of four to six years of age, a dose of univalent varicella vaccine is still needed at four to six years of age.</p>
Adults born in or after 1970	<p>All are eligible for two doses of MMR vaccine at the health care professional's discretion.</p> <p>It is strongly recommended that individuals travelling outside of Canada and students in post-secondary educational settings receive two doses.</p>
Adults born before 1970	<p>All are eligible for one dose of MMR vaccine at the health care professional's discretion.</p> <p>Though adults born before 1970 are generally presumed to have acquired natural immunity to measles, individuals travelling outside of Canada may receive one dose of MMR vaccine to ensure protection.</p>

What are the measles vaccine requirements for certain occupational groups?

- Health care workers and military personnel are required to receive **two doses** of measles-containing vaccine regardless of year of birth (unless they have laboratory evidence of immunity)
- Educational workers born in or after 1970 should receive two valid doses of measles-containing vaccine (or have laboratory evidence of immunity) to avoid being excluded from work in case of a measles exposure or outbreak

What if an individual does not have measles immunization records?

- If records of previous doses of measles-containing vaccines are unavailable, ordering serology to determine immune status is **NOT** recommended.
- It is preferable to proceed with immunization with a measles-containing vaccine. It is safe to administer additional doses of MMR vaccine to those who are already immune (NOTE: Specific occupational groups, such as health care workers, may require serology for employment purposes)

Should anyone receive a measles “booster” vaccine?

At this time, there is no recommendation to receive a “booster” (third) dose of measles-containing vaccine **in addition** to two valid documented doses. The only circumstance where an individual should have three documented doses in total is for infants vaccinated between six and 11 months for travel and then receive two additional doses after 12 months for long-lasting immunity.

Encourage parents to report their children's immunizations

Please encourage parents to report their children's immunizations to us through the [Immunization Connect Ontario Tool \(ICON\) tool](#), so we have the most up to date information for York Region.

Thank you for your continued efforts to provide lifesaving vaccines!

Resources:

- [Canadian Immunization Guide: Measles Vaccines](#)
- [Measles Information for Clinicians \(Public Health Ontario\)](#)
- [Publicly Funded Immunization Schedules for Ontario](#)
- [Measles Fact Sheet for Patients](#)

Contact Us

For more information on measles vaccination, call our Vaccine-Preventable Diseases nurses line at 1-877-464-9675, ext. 73452.

To order publicly funded vaccines, email your completed [vaccine order form](#) to vaccineinventory@york.ca or fax it to 905-830-0578.