

# VACCINE INFORMATION SHEET

## Varicella (Chickenpox) Vaccine

### Varivax® III or Varilrix® Vaccine

#### This vaccine protects against chickenpox

- Two doses are recommended for optimal protection
- Usually given at 15 months, and between four and six years of age. The four to six year old dose is usually given as MMRV (measles, mumps, rubella and varicella) vaccine
- The province of Ontario covers the cost of this vaccine for people born on or after January 1, 2000 who are at least one year of age

#### Mild side effects may occur, such as:

- Redness, swelling, discomfort or a blister-like rash at the injection site
- Fever
- Very mild symptoms of the disease, but this is rare. These mild symptoms are not dangerous and can actually demonstrate that the vaccine is working effectively to build immunity

#### Severe side effects are rare

#### People should avoid this immunization if they:

- Have ever had a severe allergic (anaphylactic) reaction to previous doses of this vaccine
- Have an allergy to any vaccine component including neomycin, neomycin sulfate or porcine gelatin\*
- Have a problem with their immune system due to illness or medication
- Received a live vaccine within the past four to six weeks (depending on the specific vaccine)
- Have received a blood product in the past three months
- Are pregnant

#### People should consult their health care provider before vaccination if they:

- Have complicated medical issues or previous severe reactions to vaccines

## Varicella (Chickenpox)

- Is a highly contagious disease common in children but can also infect teens and adults
- It begins with fever, followed by an itchy red rash that progresses to fluid-filled blisters. As the disease progresses, blisters break open, scab over and heal
- It can cause birth defects if a pregnant woman is infected
- It spreads from person to person through the air by coughing and sneezing, or through direct contact with fluid from a blister
- It spreads from person to person from one to two days before the rash appears until after all the blisters have scabbed over
- It is caused by the varicella-zoster virus, which can reactivate later in life as shingles

\*This vaccine is approved for use in members of religious groups who oppose the ingestion of pig products. Reference: [www.vaccinesafety.edu/porcine-vaccineapproval.htm](http://www.vaccinesafety.edu/porcine-vaccineapproval.htm)

## PUBLIC HEALTH

1-877-464-9675  
TTY 1-866-512-6228  
[york.ca/immunizations](http://york.ca/immunizations)



York Region