



Varicella Vaccine Information Sheet (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 4 to 6 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 1 year of age

Mild side effects may occur, such as:

- Redness, swelling, discomfort or a blister-like rash at the injection site
- Fever

Severe side effects are rare.

People should not be vaccinated with this vaccine 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
- Received a live vaccine within the past 4 to 6 weeks (depending on the specific vaccine)
- Have received a blood product in the past 3 months
- Are pregnant

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

- Have complicated medical issues or previous severe reactions to vaccines

*This vaccine is approved for use in members of religious groups who oppose the ingestion of pig products

Ref: www.vaccinesafety.edu/porcine-vaccineapproval.htm

1-800-361-5653

TTY (for the hearing impaired) 1-866-252-9933



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Chickenpox (Varicella-zoster virus)

- Is a highly contagious disease common in children but infection can also occur in 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.
- The blisters can cause scarring, or lead to more serious skin infections
- complications (including inflammation of the brain or even death) if the chickenpox blisters become infected
- It can cause birth defects if a pregnant woman gets chickenpox
- 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

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