

Vaccine Options to Protect Your Child From Measles, Mumps, Rubella and Varicella

Why Immunize Against These Diseases?

- **Measles** causes a rash, cough, runny nose, eye irritation, and fever. Complications may include ear infection, pneumonia, seizures, brain damage, and death.
- **Mumps** causes a fever, headache, and swollen glands along the jawline. Complications may include deafness, meningitis (infection of the brain and spinal cord covering), painful swelling of the testicles or ovaries, and death.
- **Rubella** causes a rash, mild fever, and arthritis (mostly in women). If a woman gets rubella while she is pregnant, she could have a miscarriage or her baby could be born with serious birth defects.
- **Varicella** causes a rash, itching, fever, and tiredness. Complications may include severe skin infection, scars, pneumonia, brain damage, and death.

Vaccine Options for Children Younger than 4 Years of Age

- There are 2 safe and effective options that parents can choose for their child's first dose. Each option provides the same level of protection against measles, mumps, rubella and varicella.

1	Combined MMRV vaccine	1 injection	About 8 in 10,000 children may have a febrile seizure 5-12 days after vaccination.
2	Separate MMR and Varicella vaccines	2 injections	About 4 in 10,000 children may have a febrile seizure 5-12 days after vaccination.

- **The risk of a child having a febrile seizure is very low with either option.**
- The combined MMRV vaccine is recommended for the **second dose**. Studies show that there is no increased risk of febrile seizures when given as the second dose.
- **Fact:** MMRV vaccine has been used in Saskatchewan since 2011.

What is a Febrile Seizure?

- Febrile means relating to a fever. Childhood febrile seizures are most common with fevers that are 38.9°C (102°F) or higher, but can also occur at lower temperatures or when a high fever is going down. In some children, childhood illnesses like ear infections or the common cold can cause a febrile seizure.
- During a febrile seizure, a child may have spasms or jerking movements, and may lose consciousness temporarily.
- Febrile seizures from any cause usually last 1 or 2 minutes, and most are not harmful.
- Febrile seizures may result in an emergency room visit, however most children recover quickly and have no lasting effects.
- **Fact:** Measles was a common cause of febrile seizures in children before the vaccine became available.

High fevers can be controlled by giving acetaminophen to your child when they start getting a fever. The Public Health Nurse will give you the *Caring for Your Child's Fever* fact sheet for more information.

A febrile seizure that happens after vaccination is **not a reason** to not get immunized with the same or other vaccines in the future.