

Students may not be up-to-date on all immunizations and may not be protected against some vaccine preventable diseases. With consent, public health nurses can give missed vaccines during scheduled school immunization clinics. **Please read about the vaccines below and indicate your choice(s) on the consent form.** If you have any questions contact your local public health unit. For more information about the vaccines, visit [www.immunizebc.ca](http://www.immunizebc.ca)

### What is the meningococcal-C conjugate (Men-C) vaccine?

The Men-C vaccine protects against meningococcal bacteria, type C.

### What is the meningococcal bacteria type-C?

This bacteria infects the lining of the brain and can cause brain damage, deafness and death. The infection is spread through coughing, sneezing and saliva. Children and adults can become sick by sharing foods, drinks and through close contact.

For more information, see HealthLinkBC File [#23a Meningococcal C Conjugate \(Men-C\) Vaccine](#)

### What are the measles, mumps and rubella (MMR) and measles, mumps, rubella and varicella (MMRV) vaccines?

MMR vaccine protects against measles, mumps and rubella viruses.

MMRV vaccine protects against measles, mumps, rubella and varicella (chickenpox) viruses.

### What are measles, mumps, rubella and varicella?

Measles, mumps, rubella and varicella (chickenpox) viruses are spread through coughing, sneezing, saliva and fluid from chickenpox blisters. Children and adults can become sick by sharing foods, drinks and through close contact.

**Measles** causes fever, rash and cold-like symptoms. Measles can lead to infections of the ears and lungs causing seizures, deafness, brain damage and even death.

**Mumps** causes fever, headaches and swelling of the glands, cheeks and testicles. Mumps can cause an infection of the lining of the brain and deafness.

**Rubella** can cause miscarriage, stillbirth or birth defects in 9 out of 10 babies born to women infected during pregnancy.

**Varicella** (chickenpox) complications can lead to swelling of the brain, seizures, deafness, brain damage and death. Infection in early pregnancy can cause miscarriage.

For more information, see: HealthLinkBC Files [#14a Measles, Mumps, Rubella \(MMR\) Vaccine](#) [#14e Measles, Mumps, Rubella and Varicella \(MMRV\) Vaccine](#)

### What is the tetanus, diphtheria, pertussis and polio (Tdap-IPV) vaccine?

The Tdap-IPV vaccine protects against tetanus, diphtheria, pertussis (whooping cough) and polio.

### What is the tetanus, diphtheria and pertussis (Tdap) vaccine?

The Tdap vaccine is for children who do not need the polio (IPV) booster.

### What is the inactivated polio (IPV) vaccine?

The IPV vaccine is for children who only need polio protection because they are up-to date on their Tdap.

### What are tetanus, diphtheria, pertussis and polio?

**Tetanus**, also known as lockjaw, is caused by bacteria found in the soil that can enter the skin through a cut or scrape. Up to 1 in 5 people who get tetanus disease may die.

**Diphtheria** is a serious bacterial infection of the nose and throat. The bacteria are easily spread through coughing, sneezing and close contact. The disease can result in very serious breathing problems. In unvaccinated people, 1 in 10 people who get diphtheria disease may die.

**Pertussis**, also known as whooping cough, can cause pneumonia, seizures, brain damage and death. The bacteria are easily spread through coughing, sneezing and close contact.

**Polio** is a virus spread through contact with the bowel movements (stool) of an infected person and from eating contaminated food or water. Polio can result in paralysis of arms or legs and can even lead to death.

For more information, see: HealthLinkBC Files [#15a Tetanus, Diphtheria, Pertussis, Polio \(Tdap-IPV\) Vaccine](#), [#18c Tetanus, Diphtheria, Pertussis \(Tdap\) Vaccine](#), [#13 Polio Vaccine \(IPV\)](#)

## What is the hepatitis A vaccine?

The hepatitis A vaccine protects against infection from the hepatitis A virus.

## What is the hepatitis A virus?

Hepatitis A is a virus that attacks the liver. It is spread through contact with bowel movements (stool) of an infected person, through food preparation or other hand-to-mouth contact and from eating contaminated food and water.

For more information, see: HealthLinkBC File [#33 Hepatitis A Vaccine](#)

## Who should not get a vaccine?

People who have had a life-threatening allergic reaction to a previous dose of a vaccine or to any component of the vaccines. See specific HealthLinkBC Files for more information.

Some people who have an immune system weakened by disease or medical treatment, those who have had a blood transfusion or blood products in the last 11 months and those with untreated active tuberculosis may not be able to have the varicella (chickenpox) or measles, mumps and rubella vaccine(s).

People who developed Guillain-Barré Syndrome (GBS) within 8 weeks of getting a tetanus vaccine, without any other cause, should not get the Tdap-IPV or Tdap vaccine. GBS is a rare condition that can result in weakness and paralysis of the body's muscles. It can occur after an infection, but in rare cases can also occur after some vaccines.

Females should not receive the chickenpox or MMR vaccines 1 month before or during pregnancy.

There is no need to delay getting immunized because of a cold or other mild illness. However, if you have concerns, speak with your public health nurse.

## What are the possible reactions to vaccines?

Common reactions may include pain, redness, swelling at the injection site, headaches, fever and tiredness. These reactions are mild and generally last 1 to 2 days.

A mild fever, a rash that looks like measles, sore joints and swelling of the glands in the face or neck can occur 7 to 12 days after receiving the MMR or MMRV vaccine. About 2 weeks after the MMRV vaccine, a mild rash that looks like chickenpox can occur. To prevent spreading the virus to others the rash should be covered until the blisters have dried and crusted over.

Rarely, more serious reactions to the MMR or MMRV vaccine can include seizures caused by fever (about 1 child in 3,000), a temporary drop in the blood cells that help prevent bleeding (about 1 person in 30,000) and encephalitis, an inflammation of the brain (about 1 person in 1 million).

There is an extremely rare possibility, less than 1 in a million, of a life-threatening allergic reaction called anaphylaxis. This may include hives, breathing problems or swelling of the throat, tongue or lips. Should anaphylaxis occur, the public health nurses are prepared to treat it and the student will be transferred to the nearest emergency department. If the symptoms occur after the clinic, call **9-1-1**.

It is important to report all serious or unexpected reactions to your health care provider.

## Vaccines are safe and protect you and your community

It is much safer to get the vaccine than to get the disease. Protect your child and others by having their immunizations up-to-date.

Many vaccine preventable diseases are rare in B.C. because of childhood immunization programs. Chickenpox and pertussis (whooping cough) still occur but are less common and milder in people who have been vaccinated.

Acetaminophen (e.g. Tylenol®) or Ibuprofen\* (e.g. Advil®) can be given for fever or soreness. ASA (e.g. Aspirin®) should not be given to anyone under 18 years of age due to the risk of Reye Syndrome.

For more information on Reye syndrome, see HealthLinkBC File [#84 Reye Syndrome](#)

For more information visit [www.HealthLinkBC.ca/healthfiles](http://www.HealthLinkBC.ca/healthfiles)