



M.M.R vaccine

Which are the diseases against which M.M.R vaccine is used?

M.M.R vaccine protects against 3 viral diseases – Measles, Mumps and Rubella. These 3 are highly contagious diseases commonly seen in childhood. M.M.R vaccine, therefore, is very crucial.

What is Measles?

Measles is a viral infection causing high grade fever, runny nose, cough, redness of eyes & rash. Rash usually begins 3-5 days after onset of symptoms - first on the face at hairline and spreads downwards upon the trunk, arms & legs. Measles can cause complications like pneumonia, ear infections, brain infections (meningitis / encephalitis)

What is Mumps?

Mumps is a viral illness that typically causes fever, headache, muscle aches and swelling of salivary glands (located in front and below the ear, under the jaw). Complications of Mumps can be severe- ranging from inflammation of testes and ovaries (leading to infertility), pancreatitis, and rarely brain infection (meningitis/encephalitis)

What is Rubella (German Measles)?

Rubella is a viral illness causing fever and rash. It tends to be usually mild infection in younger children but acquiring infection in pregnancy can cause Congenital Rubella Syndrome in the fetus (leading to heart defects, deafness and cataracts). It can also lead to spontaneous and repeated abortions. Hence, protection against Rubella is very essential.

What is the immunization schedule of M.M.R. Vaccine?

M.M.R vaccine is given as an injection 3 times – first at 6 to 9 months of age, followed by second dose at 15 months and booster dose at 5 years (IAP Recommendation)

If a child has already recovered from Measles in past, should MMR vaccine be given now?

Even though the child has already recovered from one of the diseases covered in M.M.R vaccine, the child is still susceptible to infection from other two viruses. Hence, M.M.R vaccine must be given to the child as per the recommended IAP schedule.



My child has received M.M.R vaccine at 9 months, can he still suffer from Measles?

Measles vaccine at 9 months produces protective antibodies in 85% children, whereas after the second dose, protective antibodies were found in 95% children. Therefore, there remains a minor possibility that child may still contract infection, but the severity of illness is greatly reduced. To further extend the protection, IAP also recommends a 3rd dose of M.M.R vaccine between 4-6 years of age.

If a child has received M.R vaccines during “campaign”, should M.M.R vaccine be given at routine time?

Yes, all vaccination done during campaigns are “additional” doses irrespective of immunization status of the child. MR vaccine given during the campaign does not confer protection against mumps. Hence, if a child has received doses of a vaccine during a campaign, he/she should complete the vaccine schedule through routine immunization as well. Vice-versa, even if child has received routine immunization, the campaign vaccine doses can be given to the child.

What are the side-effects of M.M.R vaccination?

M.M.R vaccine is usually well tolerated. Rarely fever, transient rash and very rarely convulsion may occur. Consult the pediatrician if any side effect is observed.

Which children should not take M.M.R vaccine?

Children with congenital or acquired immunodeficiency states, long term medication, immunosuppressant and steroids, malignancies and leukemias, etc must not take M.M.R vaccine. M.M.R vaccine should be delayed for 3-11 months after blood/plasma transfusion or immunoglobulin.

(Edited by Dr. Sanket Kale)