

# Immunization of School Pupils Act (ISPA) Vaccines

The *Immunization of School Pupils Act* (ISPA) requires school-aged children to be immunized against nine diseases. Depending on your child's immunization history, they may need one or more of the following vaccines:

Men-C-ACYW

Tdap

Tdap-IPV

IPV

MMR

MMRV

Varicella

It is safe to receive these vaccines at the same time. Immunization is the best way to protect your child, family and community from these serious and sometimes fatal diseases.

**Meningococcal** disease is an infection that is usually caused by five different groups of bacteria that infect the blood or fluid around the brain and spinal cord. It is a rare disease, but symptoms can appear and become life threatening very quickly. It can lead to permanent hearing loss, brain damage or loss of a limb. **It spreads** by direct contact with saliva or mucus from an infected person (e.g. kissing, sharing drinks or eating utensils). Infected people can spread the disease for seven days before becoming sick.

**Men-C-ACYW** vaccine provides protection against 4 out of the 5 groups of bacteria that cause infection of the blood and fluid around the brain and spinal cord.

## Tetanus, Diphtheria, Pertussis and Polio

**Tetanus** or lockjaw is a serious disease that can cause painful muscle spasms of the jaw, neck, arms, stomach and legs that can be severe enough to break bones and make it difficult to breathe and swallow. Tetanus can lead to respiratory failure and death. **It spreads** when tetanus bacteria gets into a cut in the skin and releases neurotoxin.

**Diphtheria** is a serious and very contagious disease of the nose, throat, and skin caused by the diphtheria bacteria. It causes a thick grey coating to build up at the back of the throat that makes it hard to breathe or swallow. It can cause heart failure, paralysis, nerve damage, pneumonia, and death. **It spreads** easily through the air from coughing and sneezing.

**Pertussis** or whooping cough is a very contagious disease caused by bacteria. This cough can be violent and cause a person to vomit or stop breathing for a short time. It can also cause serious complications such as pneumonia, seizures, brain damage and death. **It spreads** very easily through the air from coughing and sneezing.

**Polio** is a very serious, contagious disease caused by the polio virus. Polio can damage nerves and cause total paralysis, respiratory failure and death. There is no treatment or cure for polio. **It spreads** from drinking water or eating food with the polio virus in it. It also spreads from person-to-person.

**Tdap** vaccine is a combination vaccine that protects against tetanus, diphtheria, and pertussis. An additional dose is needed after 10 years.

**Tdap-IPV** (inactivated polio vaccine) is a combination vaccine that protects against tetanus, diphtheria, pertussis, and polio.

**IPV** (inactivated polio vaccine) protects against polio.

# Measles, Mumps, Rubella, and Varicella

**Measles** is one of the most contagious viral diseases. It causes fever, cough, runny nose, red eyes and a red blotchy rash. Measles can cause complications, such as pneumonia, ear infections, diarrhea, hearing loss, brain swelling seizures, or even death. **It spreads** from person-to-person through coughing, sneezing, or touching infected surfaces.

**Mumps** is a contagious disease caused by the mumps virus. It causes swelling of the cheeks and jaw, fever and headache. There is no treatment or cure for Mumps. **It spreads** from person-to-person through coughing, sneezing, touching infected surfaces and sharing infected items such as cups.

**Rubella** is caused by a virus that occurs worldwide and is very contagious. Symptoms include rash, headache, runny nose, fever, red eyes and aching joints (especially in young women). Rubella during pregnancy can cause miscarriage, stillbirth, heart defects and birth defects like deafness, blindness and intellectual disability. **It spreads** from person-to-person through coughing and sneezing.

**Varicella**, also known as chickenpox, is caused by varicella-zoster virus. It usually starts with fever, cough, sore throat and general aches and pains. It causes a red, itchy, fluid-filled rash all over the body that gradually scabs over. Complications include pneumonia, blood and skin infections, swelling of the brain, congenital varicella syndrome if infected in pregnancy, and severe neonatal varicella in newborns. It can reappear later in life as shingles. **It spreads** through the air from coughing and sneezing and direct contact with lesions.

**MMR** vaccine is a combination vaccine that protects against measles, mumps, and rubella.

**MMRV** vaccine is a combination vaccine that protects against measles, mumps, rubella, and varicella.

**Varicella** vaccine is a univalent vaccine that protects against varicella.

## What should I expect after vaccination?

On the arm where you got the vaccine:

- Pain, redness, or swelling
- Note: Delayed pain, redness, and swelling can occur many days following vaccination. It is usually not serious and will clear up on its own.

Throughout the rest of your body:

- Fever
- Chills
- Tiredness
- Headache
- Muscle/joint pain

## When to call your doctor

Allergic reactions to the vaccine and other serious side effects are rare. However, symptoms may occur within a week after receiving the vaccine. Contact your doctor if you develop any of the symptoms below. If your symptoms are severe, call 911.

- hives
- swelling of the face or mouth
- trouble breathing
- high fever (over 40°C)
- convulsions or seizures
- very pale colour and serious drowsiness

These vaccines are publicly-funded and are at no cost to recipients. Students can still be immunized if they do not have an Ontario Health Card.

## Already got the vaccine?

Students may have already received one or more of these vaccines. Ensure that you have reported all vaccines to Public Health by visiting [halton.ca/immunize](https://www.halton.ca/immunize) or by calling 311.

