Mumps: what to look for	About a quarter of the people infected with mumps don't show any symptoms at all, although they still spread the disease. Generally symptoms of mumps appear 12 to 25 days after you are exposed the disease, and can be worse in adults. The common symptoms include feeling unwell, painful swelling of the face and neck, earache, difficulty in swallowing, headache and mild fever (around 37.5 C).
Is mumps catching?	The mumps virus is easily and quickly spread through coughing, sneezing, or contact with saliva. People with mumps can spread the infection up to 6 days before they develop any swelling, and up to 9 days after the swelling appears. Children with mumps must be kept away from school/ child care for at least 9 days after the swelling first develops.

Rubella: the disease

Rubella, or German measles, is caused by the rubella virus. It is generally a mild disease, but rubella can cause death or serious birth defects (damage) to unborn babies if a woman is exposed to the infection during pregnancy.

- Nine out of 10 unborn babies will be damaged if a woman gets rubella in the first 10 weeks of pregnancy.
- About 1 in 5 unborn babies will be damaged between the 10th and 16th week of pregnancy.

These birth defects include brain damage, deafness, blindness, and defects in the heart and other organs. Many of these babies will have more than one birth defect, and will often die during pregnancy or soon after birth.

So why do males need rubella vaccine?	The more people that are immune to a disease means there is less chance of that disease spreading in the community. If most Australians are vaccinated against rubella, we can wipe out the disease. In recent years more men than women are contracting rubella because rubella vaccination wasn't given to boys until 1989.
Rubella: what to look for	Rubella often looks similar to measles, which is why it used to be called German measles. Signs of rubella include feeling unwell, a pink rash, swollen glands in the face and neck, aching joints, low fever, headache and sore eyes. About half the people with rubella have no symptoms at all, or just feel a little unwell. If the rash appears, it usually develops 2 or 3 weeks after you are exposed to rubella, and lasts about 3 days.
Is rubella catching?	Rubella is quickly spread through coughing, sneezing and saliva. People with rubella can spread it from 7 days before the rash appears, to at least 4 days after. Many people don't even know they have rubella but can still spread the disease. Children with rubella must be kept away from school/ child care for at least 4 days after the rash first appears. Women should have a blood test before getting pregnant to check if they are immune to rubella. If you are pregnant and come into contact with someone who has rubella, see your doctor immediately. Remember, while the risk of foetal abnormality is very high in early pregnancy, there is little risk after 20 weeks of pregnancy. Your doctor will assess the risk and discuss the options with you.

What if I get measles, mumps or rubella?

See your doctor, particularly if you think you are pregnant. Tell the surgery before you go so they can keep you (or the person with the disease) away from other patients.

If you have measles, mumps or rubella, there's not much you can do. If you are not sick enough to go to hospital, your doctor will advise you to stay at home and rest until the fever and other symptoms go away. Staying at home also stops the disease from spreading to other people.

Children must stay away from school/child care while they have the disease.

If you or a family member has rubella, let other people around you know, especially if they could be pregnant.

Want to know more?

Contact:

- Your doctor.
- Your community nurse
- Your local Aboriginal Medical Service
- Your local government Environmental Health Officer
- Your local hospital (country)
- Central Immunisation Clinic
  16 Rheola Street, WEST PERTH
  Ph: (08) 9321 1312
- www.public.health.wa.gov.au

Government of Western Australia Department of Health

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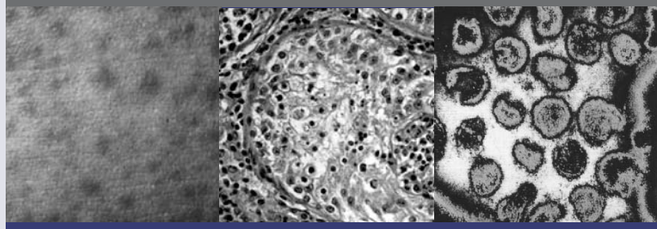
vaccination

Measles Mumps Rubella (MMR)



Delivering a Healthy WA

MMR Vaccination

The Measles vaccine includes mumps and rubella vaccine in a single combined injection (MMR). Two doses of MMR (given at 1yr and 4yrs) give about 99 per cent protection.

MMR is the only vaccination available in Australia, you can't get a 'measles only' vaccine. This combination vaccine makes sure that you are fully protected against all 3 diseases and helps reduce the spread of these diseases in our community.

Who needs it?

Since 1998, children in Western Australia have been vaccinated with MMR at 1 and 4 years of age. Most people aged over 40 years are immune to the diseases, especially measles and mumps, because they probably had the disease in childhood.

Many high school children and young adults have not been fully vaccinated (2 doses MMR – 1 month apart). It is also important to make sure you are fully vaccinated to protect you from these infections especially before travelling abroad, as these and many other diseases are still common outside Australia. If you're not sure if you are fully vaccinated, have the vaccine. An extra dose of MMR vaccine will not hurt you, and will make sure you are fully protected.

Is it safe and does it work?

Since the measles vaccine was first used in 1963, hundreds of millions of people have been vaccinated worldwide. MMR vaccine is safe, effective and has few side effects. Before vaccination, about 100 children died each year from measles in Australia. Today, deaths from measles are rare. Similarly, there are very few cases of birth defects from rubella in Australia today. Measles and rubella cases are now more common in young adults, the group least likely to have been vaccinated or to have had the diseases.

Who shouldn't have it?

Read the list below.

If you are unsure, ask your doctor, nurse or health worker.

Before being vaccinated, **you must say** if you:	
	■ Aren't feeling well (e.g. you have the flu)
	■ Have any severe allergies (e.g. antibiotics, latex, gelatine)
	■ Are pregnant or plan to be pregnant in the next 2 months
	■ Have received another vaccination in the last month
	■ Have received blood, blood products or immunoglobulin in the last 3 months
	■ Have a disease (e.g. HIV/AIDS, cancer) or having treatment that lowers immunity

Are there any side effects?

With MMR vaccination, some people get a few, temporary side effects, between 1 and 3 weeks after their first vaccination. Few people are affected by the second dose.

If you are one of the unlucky ones, you may get:	
	■ Soreness at the injection site (1 in 10)
	■ General tiredness, low fever and/or a rash (1 in 20)
	■ Swollen glands (1 in 100)
	■ Joint pains (1in 4 adult women)

As with any medicine, there is a very small chance that side effects such as allergic reaction (1 in 500,000 vaccinations) or temporary problems with blood clotting (1 in 30,000) can occur after MMR vaccination.

What if I'm pregnant?

To prevent any possible harm to your baby, you shouldn't have an MMR vaccination if you are thinking of becoming pregnant. You should also wait 2 months after having MMR vaccination before becoming pregnant.

Should you discover you are pregnant after having MMR vaccination, discuss with your doctor. There are no known cases of the vaccine harming the foetus, but doctors generally try not to give any medications during pregnancy. Having MMR vaccination in early pregnancy is not a reason to terminate a pregnancy (having an abortion).

Measles: the disease

Measles is a disease caused by the rubeola virus. Measles is not a harmless childhood disease.

- Measles kills about 1 in every 1,000 cases. In many poor countries, measles still kills 1 in every 10 young children – over a million deaths each year worldwide.
- About one third of cases get some kind of medical problem from measles, and 1 in 5 end up in hospital.
- Many cases develop pneumonia or ear infections, and some get an infection of the brain.
- In pregnancy, measles can also increase the risk of premature or stillbirths.

In very rare cases (1 in 25,000), about 10 years later, measles leads to an illness where the brain slowly dies, leading to dementia and death.

Measles: what to look for	After exposure to measles, it takes around 10 days for symptoms to appear. These include feeling unwell, a fever, runny nose, sore eyes, a cough, and diarrhoea. The blotchy red rash starts on the face about 4 days after the first symptoms, and spreads quickly down the body.
Is Measles catching?	Yes, its highly contagous. Measles is one of the most infectious diseases we know. Before vaccination, almost everyone exposed caught measles. People with measles can spread it up to 4 days before the rash appears, and up to 4 days after. The measles virus is spread through coughing, sneezing or even talking.
Measles in schools/ childcare	Children with measles must be kept away from school or childcare for at least 4 days after the rash appears. If there is a case of measles at school/ child care, children who are not vaccinated must be excluded until 14 days after the rash appears in the last case of measles in the school/ child care. However, children vaccinated within 3 days of contact with the first case can return to school/child care straight after being vaccinated. Children who have had one dose of MMR vaccine should receive a second dose from 1 month after their first MMR vaccination to ensure a good immune response.

Mumps: the disease

Mumps is a disease caused by the mumps virus.

It is becoming rare in Australia, but still kills about 1 person every 2 years.

- About 1 in 3 adult males get swollen and painful testicles, although sterility is rare.
- About 1 in 20 cases get temporary brain infections.
- About 1 in 25 cases get temporary deafness, and a few will become permanently deaf.
- About 1 in every 10,000 cases will die.