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# MEASLES VACCINE SAFETY, MONITORING and INFORMATION FOR PREGNANT PEOPLE AND NEW PARENTS

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*The most common vaccine for measles is MMR, which protects against measles, mumps, and rubella. The MMR vaccine is very safe and effective. Two doses of MMR vaccine are about 97% effective at preventing measles; one dose is about 93% effective.*

## WHO NEEDS THE MEASLES VACCINE (MMR)?

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- **Children**  
Children should receive two doses of MMR vaccine starting with the first dose at 12-15 months of age, and the second dose at 4-6 years of age or at least 28 days following the first dose.
- **Students at post-high school educational institutions**  
Students at post-high school educational institutions without evidence of measles immunity need two doses of MMR vaccine, with the second dose administered no earlier than 28 days after the first dose.
- **Adults**  
People who are born during or after 1957 who do not have evidence of immunity against measles should get at least one dose of MMR vaccine.
- **International travelers**  
People 6 months of age or older who will be traveling internationally should be protected against measles. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention offers more information on measles and international travel.

## COULD I STILL GET MEASLES IF I AM FULLY VACCINATED?

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Vaccines are tested before they're licensed for use. Once a vaccine is in use, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Food and Drug Administration always monitor the vaccine to make sure it's safe and effective.

- **CDC:**  
[www.cdc.gov/vaccinesafety/ensuringsafety/monitoring](http://www.cdc.gov/vaccinesafety/ensuringsafety/monitoring)
- **FDA:**  
[www.fda.gov/BiologicsBloodVaccines/Vaccines](http://www.fda.gov/BiologicsBloodVaccines/Vaccines)

## DO I EVER NEED A BOOSTER VACCINE?

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If you've had two doses of MMR vaccine, you don't need a booster. CDC considers people who received two doses of measles vaccine as children according to the U.S. vaccination schedule protected for life.

Adults need at least one dose of measles vaccine, unless they have evidence of immunity. Healthy adults with one documented MMR vaccine are considered protected for life. If you are unsure of your vaccine history or just want peace of mind, it is safe to get another MMR vaccine. Health care workers should have two documented vaccines as proof of immunity.

If you're not sure whether you were vaccinated, talk with your doctor.

**More information about who needs measles vaccine:**  
[www.cdc.gov/vaccines/vpd/mmr/public](http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/vpd/mmr/public)

## WHERE CAN I GET THE MEASLES VACCINE?

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- Call your doctor, nurse or clinic. If you need help finding a health care provider or if you don't have health insurance, call the Family Health Hotline at 1-800-322-2588 or visit the ParentHelp123 website:  
[www.parenthelp123.org](http://www.parenthelp123.org)
- Starting March 6, 2019, free measles (MMR) vaccines are available for children and adults at Health Point in Auburn, Auburn North, Federal Way, Kent, Midway, Renton, SeaTac, and Tukwila. Children can also receive all other school-required vaccines for free. This service is open to all and no appointment is needed. For information about locations and clinic hours:  
[www.healthpointchc.org](http://www.healthpointchc.org)

- You can also check [www.vaccinefinder.org](http://www.vaccinefinder.org) for pharmacies where you can get vaccinations. Click on locations on the map to get details about any age restrictions (pharmacies may only be licensed to vaccinate specific age groups). Call ahead to make sure they have MMR in stock. There are fewer pharmacies that vaccinate young children and toddlers. [Care Clinics at Bartell Drugs](#) accepts walk-ins who are ages two and up.

## IS THE MEASLES VACCINE SAFE?

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Research has shown that the measles vaccine (MMR) is safe. Getting vaccinated is much safer than getting any of the three diseases the vaccine protects against.

More information on the safety of the MMR vaccine from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention:

[www.cdc.gov/vaccinesafety/vaccines/mmr/mmr-studies.html](http://www.cdc.gov/vaccinesafety/vaccines/mmr/mmr-studies.html)

## HOW ARE VACCINES MONITORED FOR SAFETY?

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Vaccines are tested before they're licensed for use. Once a vaccine is in use, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Food and Drug Administration always monitor the vaccine to make sure it's safe and effective.

- **CDC:** [www.cdc.gov/vaccinesafety/Vaccine\\_Monitoring](http://www.cdc.gov/vaccinesafety/Vaccine_Monitoring)
- **FDA:** [www.fda.gov/BiologicsBloodVaccines/Vaccines](http://www.fda.gov/BiologicsBloodVaccines/Vaccines)

## ARE THERE SIDE EFFECTS FROM THE VACCINE?

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Like any medication, the measles vaccine (MMR) may cause side effects. Most are mild:

- Pain at the injection site
- Fever
- Mild rash
- Swollen glands in the cheek or neck

## CAN YOU GET MEASLES FROM SOMEONE WHO HAS RECENTLY BEEN VACCINATED?

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No, the weakened virus in the MMR vaccine is not able to be passed from someone who has just been vaccinated to another person.

## SHOULD PREGNANT PEOPLE GET THE MEASLES VACCINE (MMR)?

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Pregnant people should not get the MMR vaccine. Pregnant people who need the vaccine should wait until after giving birth. Women should avoid getting pregnant for four weeks after getting the MMR vaccine.

## HOW SOON CAN A NEW BABY GET VACCINATED AGAINST MEASLES?

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The recommendation for babies is to get the first of two doses of MMR at 12-15 months of age. The second dose, usually given at 4-6 years, will provide full protection for your child.

## MY BABY IS UNDER 12 MONTHS OLD. WHAT DO I DO SINCE SHE IS TOO YOUNG FOR THE MMR VACCINE?

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Infants depend fully on the immunity of the community around them for protection. If parents or caregivers haven't gotten the MMR vaccine or had measles in the past, they should get vaccinated. It's important to make sure people who are around your new baby do not expose your baby to measles – and other diseases like whooping cough – that your baby is too young to be vaccinated against. This includes siblings, who should also be up-to-date on all their childhood vaccines for their own protection and to protect the baby. You may also want to consider delaying travel to areas where there are current outbreaks until the outbreak is over or your baby is old enough for vaccination.

For updates on the outbreak in Washington state, go to [www.doh.wa.gov/measles](http://www.doh.wa.gov/measles)