

ONTARIO IS EXPANDING ITS FREE VACCINE PROGRAM.

The second dose of **Chickenpox vaccine** for children 1-11 years of age.



A second dose of the chickenpox (varicella) vaccine is now available. This safe, effective booster will provide added protection against this highly contagious illness.

Ask your health care provider for details.

Immunization is the foundation for a healthy life.

ontario.ca/vaccines • 1-866-532-3161 • TTY 1-800-387-5559

WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT CHICKENPOX

What are the symptoms of chickenpox?

Children with chickenpox (or varicella) will feel flu-like symptoms such as fatigue, mild headache, fever, chills and muscle or joint aches a day or two before an itchy, red rash appears. The rash appears as raised red blisters that are extremely itchy. Some children have only a few blisters, while others can have as many as 500. These blisters dry up and form scabs in four to five days.

How is chickenpox spread?

Chickenpox is extremely contagious. The most common way the infection is spread is through coughs or sneezes. The child will be most infectious from one to two days before the rash appears. You can also get chickenpox if you touch a blister or the liquid from a blister.

Why is the second dose of chickenpox vaccine important?

Giving two doses of the chickenpox vaccine will improve your child's immune response to chickenpox and reduce the number of infections and subsequent severity of complications.

Is the chickenpox vaccine safe?

Yes, it is a safe and effective vaccine. Most children will have no side effects. Severe reactions are very rare. **However, do not give aspirin for pain or fever after vaccination.** The use of aspirin after vaccination has been associated with an increased risk of Reye's Syndrome, a severe disorder of the liver and brain.

How is the chickenpox vaccine given?

It is recommended that children at 15 months of age receive their first dose of the chickenpox vaccine. The second dose will be offered to children between 4 to 6 years of age as part of the MMRV vaccine, which protects children from measles, mumps, rubella (German measles), and varicella (chickenpox).

However, if your child is between 1 -11 years of age and has already received two doses of the MMR vaccine which protects them from measles, mumps and rubella as well as one dose of the varicella vaccine a second dose of the chickenpox vaccine is recommended.

Is it important to keep a record?

Yes. Make sure your child's personal immunization card is updated each time a vaccine is received. It's an important document so keep it in a safe place!