

# Specialists In Reproductive Medicine & Surgery, P.A.

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## Varicella (Chickenpox) Vaccine Consent

Primary Varicella Zoster (Chickenpox) is a common infection that the majority of men and women contracted during childhood. It is estimated that only 3% of those with a probable history of Chicken Pox will not be immune. However, for those with a negative or unknown history, the risk for non-immunity risk rises to 20%. There is now a vaccine available which protects the woman and her unborn child from Chickenpox.

Chickenpox infections occur in only about 1/2000 pregnancies. Most of the time, neither the child nor the mother are adversely affected when the mother is exposed to Chickenpox. Some exceptions do, however, exist:

- If exposure occurs within the first 12 weeks of gestation, the risks of Congenital Varicella Syndrome increase to an estimated 3% or less. Babies affected by Congenital Varicella Syndrome may have small limbs, skin lesions, blindness and neurological defects including mental retardation. The syndrome also leads to a higher risk of stillbirth.
- If a non-immune mom is exposed to Chickenpox just prior to or following delivery, the child has a 20% risk for contracting a severe case of Chickenpox with 30% of these children dying.
- If the woman gets Chickenpox anytime during pregnancy, she can contract pneumonia with up to 25% of these women dying. Thankfully, these complications occur infrequently.

*If possible, we would like to minimize the risks of any Varicella infections through vaccination.*

### **The following recommendations are suggested by your physician:**

- If you have a history of Chickenpox, antibody testing is normally not done and the vaccine not administered.
- If you *uncertain* or know that you never had Chickenpox, the following is suggested:
  - ⇒ Check an antibody titer to see if you are immune.
  - ⇒ If the antibody titer indicates no previous infection, administer the vaccine.
- If the vaccine is given, one may want to wait just one month before conceiving, although no newborn children have been found to have problems when they were conceived shortly following the mother getting the vaccine.

The complications of the vaccine include redness and soreness at the injection site. Rare allergic reactions can also take place. Please keep in mind that length of immunity following vaccine administration is currently uncertain and that additional booster(s) may be required in the future.

### **After reading the above material, I hereby agree to the following (Initials only):**

(Initials only): \_\_\_\_\_ I **DO NOT** want Chickenpox antibody testing or the vaccine administered.

(Initials only): \_\_\_\_\_ I would like the antibody test, and if not immune, I agree to have the  
Chickenpox vaccine administered.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Patient

\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Witness

\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_  
Date

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# CHICKENPOX VACCINE

## WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Many Vaccine Information Statements are available in Spanish and other languages. See [www.immunize.org/vis](http://www.immunize.org/vis).

### 1 Why get vaccinated?

Chickenpox (also called varicella) is a common childhood disease. It is usually mild, but it can be serious, especially in young infants and adults.

- It causes a rash, itching, fever, and tiredness.
- It can lead to severe skin infection, scars, pneumonia, brain damage, or death.
- The chickenpox virus can be spread from person to person through the air, or by contact with fluid from chickenpox blisters.
- A person who has had chickenpox can get a painful rash called shingles years later.
- Before the vaccine, about 11,000 people were hospitalized for chickenpox each year in the United States.
- Before the vaccine, about 100 people died each year as a result of chickenpox in the United States.

Chickenpox vaccine can prevent chickenpox.

Most people who get chickenpox vaccine will not get chickenpox. But if someone who has been vaccinated does get chickenpox, it is usually very mild. They will have fewer blisters, are less likely to have a fever, and will recover faster.

### 2 Who should get chickenpox vaccine and when?

#### Routine

Children who have never had chickenpox should get 2 doses of chickenpox vaccine at these ages:

1st Dose: 12-15 months of age

2nd Dose: 4-6 years of age (may be given earlier, if at least 3 months after the 1st dose)

People 13 years of age and older (who have never had chickenpox or received chickenpox vaccine) should get two doses at least 28 days apart.

**Chickenpox**

**3/13/08**

### Catch-Up

Anyone who is not fully vaccinated, and never had chickenpox, should receive one or two doses of chickenpox vaccine. The timing of these doses depends on the person's age. Ask your provider.

Chickenpox vaccine may be given at the same time as other vaccines.

Note: A "combination" vaccine called **MMRV**, which contains both chickenpox and MMR vaccines, may be given instead of the two individual vaccines to people 12 years of age and younger.

### 3 Some people should not get chickenpox vaccine or should wait

- People should not get chickenpox vaccine if they have ever had a life-threatening allergic reaction to a previous dose of chickenpox vaccine or to gelatin or the antibiotic neomycin.
- People who are moderately or severely ill at the time the shot is scheduled should usually wait until they recover before getting chickenpox vaccine.
- Pregnant women should wait to get chickenpox vaccine until after they have given birth. Women should not get pregnant for 1 month after getting chickenpox vaccine.
- Some people should check with their doctor about whether they should get chickenpox vaccine, including anyone who:
  - Has HIV/AIDS or another disease that affects the immune system
  - Is being treated with drugs that affect the immune system, such as steroids, for 2 weeks or longer
  - Has any kind of cancer
  - Is getting cancer treatment with radiation or drugs
- People who recently had a transfusion or were given other blood products should ask their doctor when they may get chickenpox vaccine.

Ask your provider for more information.

## 4

### What are the risks from chickenpox vaccine?

A vaccine, like any medicine, is capable of causing serious problems, such as severe allergic reactions. The risk of chickenpox vaccine causing serious harm, or death, is extremely small.

Getting chickenpox vaccine is much safer than getting chickenpox disease. Most people who get chickenpox vaccine do not have any problems with it. Reactions are usually more likely after the first dose than after the second.

#### Mild Problems

- Soreness or swelling where the shot was given (about 1 out of 5 children and up to 1 out of 3 adolescents and adults)
- Fever (1 person out of 10, or less)
- Mild rash, up to a month after vaccination (1 person out of 25). It is possible for these people to infect other members of their household, but this is extremely rare.

#### Moderate Problems

- Seizure (jerking or staring) caused by fever (very rare).

#### Severe Problems

- Pneumonia (very rare)

Other serious problems, including severe brain reactions and low blood count, have been reported after chickenpox vaccination. These happen so rarely experts cannot tell whether they are caused by the vaccine or not. If they are, it is extremely rare.

Note: The first dose of **MMRV** vaccine has been associated with rash and higher rates of fever than MMR and varicella vaccines given separately. Rash has been reported in about 1 person in 20 and fever in about 1 person in 5. Seizures caused by a fever are also reported more often after MMRV. These usually occur 5-12 days after the first dose.

## 5

### What if there is a moderate or severe reaction?

#### What should I look for?

- Any unusual condition, such as a high fever, weakness, or behavior changes. Signs of a serious

allergic reaction can include difficulty breathing, hoarseness or wheezing, hives, paleness, weakness, a fast heart beat or dizziness.

#### What should I do?

- **Call** a doctor, or get the person to a doctor right away.
- **Tell** your doctor what happened, the date and time it happened, and when the vaccination was given.
- **Ask** your provider to report the reaction by filing a Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System (VAERS) form.

Or you can file this report through the VAERS website at [www.vaers.hhs.gov](http://www.vaers.hhs.gov), or by calling **1-800-822-7967**.

*VAERS does not provide medical advice.*

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### The National Vaccine Injury Compensation Program

A federal program has been created to help people who may have been harmed by a vaccine.

For details about the National Vaccine Injury Compensation Program, call **1-800-338-2382** or visit their website at [www.hrsa.gov/vaccinecompensation](http://www.hrsa.gov/vaccinecompensation).

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### How can I learn more?

- Ask your provider. They can give you the vaccine package insert or suggest other sources of information.
- Call your local or state health department.
- Contact the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC):
  - Call **1-800-232-4636 (1-800-CDC-INFO)**
  - Visit CDC website at: [www.cdc.gov/vaccines](http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines)



**DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES  
CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION**

Vaccine Information Statement (Interim)  
Varicella Vaccine (3/13/08) 42 U.S.C. §300aa-26