

PRESS RELEASE

MMR (Measles, Mumps, Rubella) Vaccine: Are U Protected?

May 22, 2019: Utah is surrounded by states hit by the measles outbreak. The Utah Department of Health says it's not a matter of IF the outbreak will hit Utah, but WHEN.

With Measles cases on the rise globally, adults should ensure they are adequately vaccinated against this serious and potentially fatal disease. CDC recommends that people get the MMR vaccine to protect against measles, mumps, and rubella. Children should get two doses of the MMR vaccine, starting with the first dose at 12 to 15 months of age, and the second dose (at least 28 days after the first dose) at 4 through 6 years of age. Teens and adults should also be up to date on their MMR vaccination. *Children may also get the MMRV vaccine which protects against measles, mumps, rubella, and varicella (chickenpox). This vaccine is only licensed for use in children who are 12 months through 12 years of age. The MMRV vaccine may be given with other vaccines.*

Those at Greatest Risk

Individuals who received the measles vaccine in the 1960's may need to be vaccinated depending on which immunization was administered. Between 1963 and 1967 there was a killed measles vaccine available, but it was found to not be effective. These individuals are not adequately protected and should be revaccinated. Those receiving a live dose of the vaccine in the 1960s should be protected.

Individuals born before 1957 are considered to have likely been infected naturally with measles during childhood since the vaccine was not yet available and are generally considered protected and don't need the MMR vaccine. Healthcare personnel born before 1957 without laboratory evidence of immunity or disease should consider getting two MMR doses.

Individuals who have had one dose, and who plan on traveling internationally should receive a second MMR dose at least 2 weeks before traveling. Those traveling internationally who have not been vaccinated against measles should get 2 MMR doses, separated by at least 28 days.

Why Two Doses?

A single MMR dose is approximately 93% effective, while two doses are 97% effective against measles. Prior to 1989, only one dose was recommended for children. After the outbreak in 1989, the CDC's Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices recommended a second dose at 4-6 years of age after the first dose at 12-15 months.

How Do I Know If I Need the MMR Vaccine?

Locating vaccine records may be difficult for adults, as state immunization registries were created more recently. In some cases, your school or employer may have your immunization record. You may also contact your healthcare provider or by calling 435-722-6169.

The Utah Immunization Information System (USIIS) is a state-wide immunization database that contains vaccination records of children and some adults. You may contact the Utah 2 Immunization Program at 801-538-9450 or the Utah Immunization Hotline at 1-800-275-0659 to request a search for immunization records in USIIS.

If the records cannot be located, then it is better to err on the side of caution and get the MMR vaccine.

Is the MMR Vaccine Required?

State laws require children entering childcare or public schools to have certain vaccinations. The Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices recommends that all states require children entering childcare, school, college, and other postsecondary educational institutions to be up to date on MMR vaccination.

How Does the Vaccine Work?

MMR is a weakened live virus vaccine. After injection, the viruses cause a harmless infection in the vaccinated person with very few, if any, symptoms before they are eliminated from the body. An individual's immune system fights the infection caused by the weakened virus, and immunity develops.

About 3 out of 100 people who get two doses of MMR vaccine will get measles if exposed to the virus. However, they are more likely to have a milder illness, and are also less likely to spread the disease to other people.

Is It Safe for Women of Childbearing Age?

Before getting pregnant, women of childbearing age should check with their doctor to ensure they are vaccinated. Pregnant women should wait to get the MMR vaccine until after they are no longer pregnant. It is safe for breastfeeding women to receive the MMR vaccination, as breastfeeding does not interfere with the response to the vaccine, and the baby will not be affected by the vaccine through breast milk.

Who Should Not Get the MMR Vaccine?

- Those with severe, life-threatening allergies to the MMR vaccine components.
- Those with weakened immune systems (or immediate family with history of immune system problems)
- Those with conditions causing easy bleeding/bruising
- Those who have recently had a blood transfusion (postpone for 3+ months)
- Those with Tuberculosis
- Those who have received other vaccines in the past 4 weeks
- Those with severe illness (consult your provider)

Remember, one dose of the MMR vaccine is 93% effective against measles, while two doses of the MMR vaccine are 97% effective against measles. With recent cases and a potential outbreak, protect yourself and those you care about by verifying that you have the correct doses of the MMR vaccine.

Julianne Merkley, Employee Health Nurse at Uintah Basin Healthcare states, "There is overwhelming scientific evidence showing that vaccines are the most effective and safe interventions to both prevent individual illness and protect public health. Receiving the proper doses of the MMR vaccine to vaccinate against measles, mumps and rubella protects you, your children, and those who cannot be vaccinated due to compromised immune systems".

To get an MMR vaccine, schedule an appointment with your provider by calling The Clinic at 435.722.3971.

Sources: Measles, mumps, and rubella (MMR) vaccination: what everyone should know. CDC website. <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/vpd/mmr/public/index.html>. Last updated March 28, 2019.

Helpful Resources:

If you have not immunized your child(ren), there is a vaccine "catch up" schedule available at: <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/schedules/hcp/imz/catchup.html#table-catchup>

[Measles Fact Sheet for Parents](#)

[Immunization Schedules](#)

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