

## WHAT IS CHICKENPOX?

- A highly infectious viral illness that affects 95% of children under the age of 12; and
- Characterized by an itchy, blistering rash with mild fever.
- Rash could appear to skin and to the mucosa of the eyes, as well as in the mouth and throat.



## WHAT ARE THE COMPLICATIONS OF CHICKENPOX?

- Scarring of the skin, skin infections, ear infections and pneumonia;
- Other rare but serious complications such as inflammation of the brain can occur;
- Transmission from a pregnant mother to unborn child can result in birth defects; and
- The chickenpox virus can remain dormant in the body and reactivate later in life in the form of shingles;
- Serious streptococcus group A infection (flesh eating disease);
- Death

## CHICKENPOX VACCINE (VARIVAX)

- Available in Canada since 1998;
- Prevents chickenpox in over 80% of children; and
- Prevents severe chickenpox in others, (less than 50 pox versus 250-500 pox).

## WHAT REACTIONS ARE MOST COMMON?

- Pain and redness at injection site within two days (20% of cases).
- Low-grade fever (10-15% of cases) and/or mild chickenpox-like rash which may occur up to six weeks after immunization (5% of cases).

Tylenol/Tempra (acetaminophen) is recommended as the first line drug to relieve fever and discomfort in infants and children.

**DO NOT USE Aspirin in children under 16 years of age.**



## WHO SHOULD GET THIS VACCINE?

- Healthy persons aged one year and older who have not had chickenpox.
- Women who have been vaccinated should not get pregnant for a month after their vaccination.

## WHO SHOULD NOT GET THIS VACCINE?

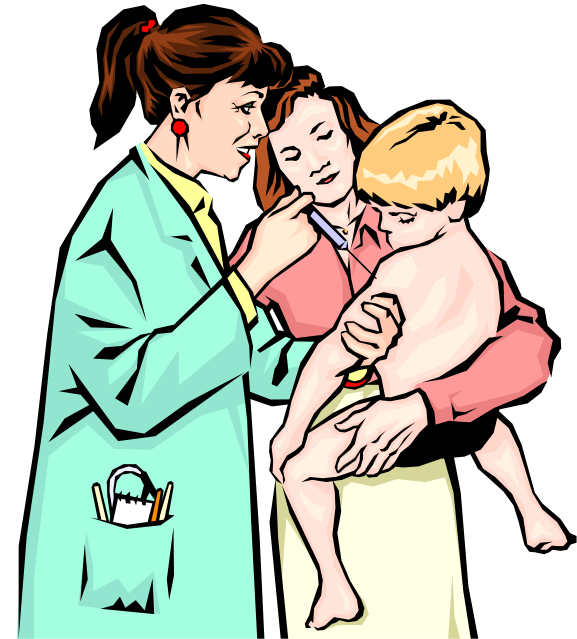
Anyone who:

- Is sick with fever or infection;
- Is allergic to the vaccine or its components (gelatin, neomycin);
- Has an immune illness or lives with someone who has an immune illness; or
- Is pregnant or living with someone who is pregnant who has not had chickenpox.

For more information  
Please Contact:  
Yellowknife Public Health  
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867-920-6570

[www.yhssa.org](http://www.yhssa.org)

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Chickenpox  
Vaccine