



Measles, Mumps, and Rubella Vaccines (Individual and Combined) *What You Need to Know*

Deployment Medication Information Sheets (DMIS) are provided by the U.S. Army Center for Health Promotion and Preventive Medicine (USACHPPM). Written for soldiers and their families, they provide basic information on deployment medications that are intended as guidance only; consult your health care provider for more information.

What are measles, mumps, and rubella? Should I get the vaccines?

Measles, mumps, and rubella (German measles) are serious diseases. They spread when the virus passes from an infected person to the nose or throat of others.

- **Measles** virus can cause rash, cough, runny nose, eye irritation, and fever. It can lead to ear infection, pneumonia, diarrhea, seizures, brain damage, and death.
 - All travelers should be vaccinated against measles, especially adults who have not had measles or have not been vaccinated.
- **Mumps** can cause fever, headache, and swollen glands under the jaw. It can lead to hearing loss, meningitis (infection of brain and spinal cord coverings), and, in males, painful, swollen testicles.
 - Mumps exist throughout most of the world.
 - While vaccination against mumps is not a requirement for entry into any country, susceptible adults should receive a single dose of vaccine before traveling.
- **Rubella** can cause rash, mild fever, and arthritis. If acquired during pregnancy, a woman may lose her baby or the baby may be born with birth defects such as deafness, blindness, heart disease, brain damage, and other serious birth defects.
 - Rubella exists throughout the world and is on the rise in many countries.
 - Travelers going outside of the U.S. should have documented proof of immunity.
 - Persons without rubella immunity who travel abroad should be vaccinated.
 - Vaccination is especially important for women of childbearing age, particularly those planning to remain out of the country for a long period of time.

How do I take the vaccines?



Your health care provider will give you the vaccine in an injection. Children and adults with an unknown vaccine history should receive two doses of the vaccine. If you have an infection at the time your vaccination is scheduled, your health care provider may delay the vaccination until you are better. These vaccines can be given as individual vaccinations or as a single vaccination of all three, called MMR.

The measles, mumps, rubella, and combined (MMR) vaccines provide a high level of protection.

What does the military require?

The vaccine is required for military recruit populations where there can be disease outbreaks. It is also required for high-risk occupational groups such as health care personnel with direct patient contact. The vaccine is recommended for all other susceptible personnel.

Are there any side effects?

- You may have irritation, redness, swelling, warmth, itching, burning, or pain at the injection site.
- You may have a fever greater than 39.4°C (103°F) 5 to 12 days after vaccination.
- Reactions are usually mild and transient.
- Call your health care provider if you experience chest pain, stiffness, trouble moving, skin rash, or difficulty breathing.

Is there any reason I shouldn't get the vaccine?

Tell your health care provider if:

- You have any disease that affects the immune system, are on steroids, have cancer, are on cancer treatment with x-rays or drugs, have tuberculosis, have blood disorders, or are ill at the time of the injection.
- You have any allergies, especially to eggs, neomycin antibiotic, or gelatin.
- You're taking any over-the-counter, prescription, or herbal medicine.

What if I'm pregnant or breast-feeding?

- This medication should not be used during pregnancy. Discuss the risks and benefits with your health care provider. Women should not become pregnant within 3 months of vaccination.
- It is not known if this medication appears in breast milk. Consult your health care provider before breast-feeding.

What should I do if I miss a dose?

If you miss a dose for any reason, get the missed dose as soon as possible and then continue the injection schedule. Do NOT re-start the vaccination series.

You can avoid measles, mumps, and rubella!

- Get each vaccination as scheduled.
- Practice good hand washing and proper personal hygiene.
- Properly prepare and store foods.
- Use only Veterinary or Preventive Medicine-approved foods, beverages, or water.

Be sure the vaccination is recorded in your medical record.

Where can I get more information?

- Health care provider at your military treatment facility.
- Military Immunizations web page: <http://www.tricare.osd.mil/immunization/vaccines.html>
- CDC Specific Disease web site: www.cdc.gov/health/diseases.htm
- CDC Vaccine Information web site: www.cdc.gov/nip/publications/VIS/default.htm

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