



# Varicella (Chickenpox) Varivax®III. Varilrix®

The varicella vaccine protects against chickenpox.

## Who should get this vaccine? <sup>1</sup>

- Routinely given to all children at 15 months of age.
- A booster dose of this vaccine is given to all children at 4 to 6 years of age as MMRV vaccine, which also protects against measles, mumps and rubella.
- All children born on or after Jan 1, 2000 are eligible for two doses of this vaccine free (publicly funded).
- This vaccine may be recommended for others based on risk factors, however they would have to purchase this vaccine.

## How well does this vaccine work? <sup>1</sup>

- 99.4% of those fully vaccinated are protected against varicella.

## Is there an alternative to this vaccine?

At this time there are no other ways to prevent this disease. Hand washing and covering the mouth and nose while coughing/sneezing can help reduce the spread of disease.

## Is this vaccine safe?

The risk of a serious reaction or side effect from this vaccine is much less than the risk of varicella.

If you experience any side effect worse than what is listed below, please seek medical advice and notify the health unit.

## Common side effects of this vaccine <sup>1</sup>

- Pain and redness where needle was given.

## Less common:

- Varicella like rash where needle was given usually within 5-26 days after the needle was given.
- Low grade fever

## Who should not receive this vaccine? <sup>1</sup>

- Anyone with an allergy to any of the vaccine components or who has had an allergic or anaphylactic reaction to this vaccine.
- Anyone with an immune system that isn't working properly.
- Anyone with blood disorders or cancers affecting the bone marrow, blood or lymphatic system.
- Anyone who is pregnant. Women should delay pregnancy by at least 28 days after receiving a live vaccine.
- Anyone with active, untreated tuberculosis (TB).
- Anyone who has had another live vaccine in the last 4 weeks.

### What is in this vaccine? <sup>2,3</sup>

| Varivax®III                   | Varilrix®     | Also found in...                                                     |
|-------------------------------|---------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Neomycin                      | Neomycin      | Antibiotics                                                          |
|                               | Amino acids   | Red meat, quinoa                                                     |
|                               | Human albumin | Drug manufacturing                                                   |
|                               | Lactose       | Milk, yogurt                                                         |
|                               | Polyalcohols  | Artificial sweeteners                                                |
| Porcine gelatin               |               | Lunch meats, frozen desserts                                         |
| Fetal bovine serum            |               | Antibiotics/Anti-inflammatories                                      |
| Monosodium L-glutamate        |               | Tomatoes, parmesan cheese                                            |
| Potassium chloride            |               | Chocolate milk, Yogurt                                               |
| Potassium phosphate monobasic |               | Food additive                                                        |
| Sodium chloride               |               | Table salt                                                           |
| Sodium phosphate dibasic      |               | Laxatives, food additive-emulsifier, leavening agent for baked goods |
| Sucrose                       |               | Table Sugar                                                          |
| Urea                          |               | Human body                                                           |

### What else do I need to know?

It is important for you to keep a current record of your child's vaccines.

When your child begins school you will be asked to provide a copy of this record to the school, who will forward it onto the health unit.

The health unit is required by law to keep immunization records for all children attending a day nursery or school. Health care providers do not share immunization records with the health unit. This is the parent's responsibility. You can share/update your child's record in the following ways:

Use the secure on-line form on our website – [www.simcoemuskokahealth.org/immsonline](http://www.simcoemuskokahealth.org/immsonline)

Fax a copy to 705-721-1495

Mail a copy to: VPD Program, Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit, 15 Sperling Drive, Barrie, ON, L4M 6K9.

Call Your Health Connection at 705-721-7520.

### References:

Canadian Immunization Guide. Part 4-Active Vaccines: Varicella Vaccine. Ottawa: Public Health Agency of Canada; 2015.

Canadian Immunization Guide. Part 1-Key Immunization Information 2013. Table 1: Types and contents of vaccines available for use in Canada. Ottawa: Public Health Agency of Canada; 2015.

Moore, D. Your Child's Best Shot (4<sup>th</sup> ed.). Canadian Paediatric Society, 2015.