

# Chickenpox

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## ***Can The Chickenpox Be Prevented By A Vaccination?***

Yes, by a new vaccination called Varivax.

## ***Is The New Chickenpox Vaccination Recommended?***

Yes, on April 10, 1995 the American Academy of Pediatrics recommended the routine use of the new chickenpox vaccination for all children, adolescents, and young adults who have not already been infected with chickenpox.

## ***Who Should Receive The Chickenpox Vaccination?***

The following recommendations are for those individuals who have never had the disease.

- All healthy children between 12-18 months
- Healthy children aged 18 months to 12 years without a reliable history of chickenpox
- All susceptible contacts who have no history of the chickenpox
- Persons at high risk of exposure (e.g., teachers of young children, day care workers, and residents and staff in institutional settings)

- Person who work or live in certain institutional settings (e.g., college
- students, in mates and staff of
- correctional institutions, and military personnel)
- Non-pregnant woman of childbearing age

## ***What Is The Recommended Dose?***

The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that a singly dose be given between 12 and 18 months of age. This immunization can also be given at the same time as the child's first M MR. Older children may be immunized at the earliest convenient opportunity, also with a single dose. Healthy adolescents, past their 13<sup>th</sup> birthday who have not been immunized previously and have no history of varicella infection, should receive two doses of the vaccine four to eight weeks apart.

## ***How Does Chickenpox Effect Our Society?***

The annual cost to our nation in time lost from work and productivity is \$400 million dollars which includes time off of work and medical cost. Chickenpox afflicts approximately 4 million patients per year.

## ***What Are The Side Effects Of This New Vaccination?***

About 1% of children may get fever and mild bumps.

## ***Can Adults Who Have Never Had The Chickenpox Be Given The Vaccination?***

Yes, adults who have not had the disease may also be given the vaccination. Two doses four to eight weeks apart is recommended.

## ***Who Should Not Receive The Vaccination?***

Those that should not receive the vaccination include: children less than 12 months of age, anyone with a suppressed immune system, pregnant women, and people with allergies to the drug neomycin.