

person who has received Varicella vaccine for 6 weeks after immunization because of an association between wild type varicella, salicylate therapy and Reye's Syndrome.

Please remain in the waiting room for 15 minutes after immunization. See a doctor or seek medical attention if any serious side effect occurs. Report any serious reaction to the public health nurse.

4. What are the situations in which Varicella vaccine should not be given?

The vaccine should not be given to anyone who has had an anaphylactic (severe or life threatening) reaction to a previous dose of Varicella vaccine or to any component of the vaccine including neomycin. Those who have had a reaction to eggs (including an anaphylactic reaction) can be immunized with Varicella vaccine.

Pregnant women should not receive this vaccine. Women who are contemplating pregnancy and who receive this vaccine should wait at least four weeks before becoming pregnant.

Persons presenting with significant acute fever and illness should return later for their vaccine.

Precautions: Assessment of a person's health status is required by the Chief Public Health Office in the following situations:

Persons with impaired immune function should not normally receive live vaccines without consultation from their attending physician and possibly an immunologist.

Persons on chronic salicylate therapy may be able to receive this vaccine pending consultation with their attending physician.

Passive immunization with human immune globulin or receipt of most blood products can interfere with the immune response to live vaccines. The administration of vaccine may have to be delayed for a period of time, usually between three to 11 months.

Post partum women who receive Rh Immune Globulin and who are non-immune to varicella should generally wait 3 months before receiving varicella vaccine, based on risk assessment.

5. What are the alternatives to not receiving the Varicella vaccine?

The chance of acquiring chickenpox is very high in the non-immunized person. Varicella is mainly a disease of childhood developing in 50% of children by the age of 5 years and 90% by the age of 12 years. Risk of severe varicella infection increases with age. However, because most infections occur in children up to 12 years of age in unvaccinated communities, the majority of severe cases occur in this age group.

The disease is more serious for persons with decreased immunity (including cancer, leukemia or lymphoma or an inherited disease of immunity), on high doses of steroids, or in pregnant women without immunity. In these cases, it is recommended that persons avoid exposure in times of known outbreaks. If exposure occurs, persons should see their doctor.

Note: A person who is non-immune to chickenpox and is exposed to a person with chickenpox disease may be able to receive the vaccine up to five days after being exposed, and thus decrease the chance of acquiring the disease.

The Varicella vaccine is very safe and the recommended schedule results in over 98% protection from the disease.

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