Important Information about **Measles, Mumps and Rubella Diseases** and Measles, Mumps and Rubella (MMR) Vaccine

**PLEASE READ THIS CAREFULLY**

**What is MEASLES?**
- It is a severe, highly contagious illness caused by a virus and can affect both children and adults.
- It causes a rash, high fever, cough, runny nose and watery eyes lasting 1 to 2 weeks.
- It may lead to ear infections and pneumonia.
- It may result in encephalitis (inflammation of the brain) which occurs in about one case in 1,000 people and may result in convulsions or deafness.
- It can be a life-threatening disease.
- It is preventable by immunization.

**What is MUMPS?**
- It is a severe, highly contagious illness caused by a virus and can affect both children and adults.
- It causes fever, headache and inflammation of the salivary glands. This causes the cheeks to swell.
- It may cause a mild inflammation of the covering of the brain and spinal cord (meningitis).
- It may also cause encephalitis (inflammation of the brain).
- It can cause deafness.
- It may cause painful inflammation, and swelling of the testicles or abdominal pain.
- It is preventable by immunization.

**What is RUBELLA?**
- It is a severe, highly contagious illness caused by a virus and can affect both children and adults.
- It is also called German measles.
- It can cause encephalitis (inflammation of the brain).
- It causes a slight fever, rash and swelling of nodes in the neck which lasts about 3 days.
- It may result in swelling and aching of the joints which lasts for a week or two.
- It may lead to a temporary bleeding disorder (purpura).
- It can cause deformities of the unborn child, if rubella occurs during pregnancy.
- It is preventable by immunization.

**What is MMR Vaccine?**
- MMR vaccine contains a tiny amount of live virus that is specially treated so that it won’t cause the disease in healthy people.
- Immunization with MMR vaccine is the best way to prevent measles, mumps and rubella.
- MMR vaccine is three vaccines combined into a single immunization.
- The vaccine is given by injection.
- The vaccine is very effective in preventing measles, mumps and rubella.
- Ninety percent or more of the people who receive the vaccine will have full protection, probably for life.
- The remaining 10% who are not fully protected after receiving the vaccine may get the disease if exposure occurs, but the illness will be milder. The booster received between 18 months and 6 years of age will provide protection for most of these children.

**Who should receive the MMR Vaccine?**
- The Nova Scotia schedule recommends this vaccine be given at age 12 months and again between 18 months and 6 years of age.
- Anyone born in 1970 or later should receive 2 doses of MMR vaccine.

**CAUTION **

**SOME PEOPLE SHOULD CHECK WITH A HEALTH CARE PROVIDER BEFORE THEY RECEIVE THIS VACCINE.**
- People whose immune systems are weak because of disease or certain medications.
- Anyone who has received any blood product within the preceding 3–11 months.

**Who Should NOT Receive MMR Vaccine**
- Babies less than one year old.
- This vaccine is not recommended for pregnant women. If a woman wishes to get any of these vaccines, she should ideally wait at least 1 month before getting pregnant.
- People who have had a serious allergic reaction to a previous dose or any component of MMR vaccine.
- MMR and Varicella vaccines can be given at the same time. If not given on the same day there should be 4 weeks between receiving each vaccine.
- People who are sick or have a fever (temperature of 39.5°C/103°F or greater).

*Please read other side.*
Your child has received the MMR vaccine. This vaccine is important in protecting your baby or child from measles, mumps and rubella.

People should stay in the clinic for at least 15 minutes after receiving any type of immunization to monitor possible reaction. As with any vaccine there is a slight possibility that a more serious reaction could occur.

Possible Side Effects from the Vaccine
- Common side effects include:
  - Redness, swelling and pain at the injection site.
  - A fever, rash, sore throat and headache may occur about 5–12 days after the vaccination, which may last 1–2 days.
  - Rarely, pain and/or swelling of the testicle(s) may occur.

As fever may occur, make sure you have acetaminophen or ibuprofen at home. Follow the instructions that come with the product. These medications should not be taken if you have certain medical conditions. Talk to your health care provider about your medical history before using either of these medications.

Call Your Health Care Provider If:
- The fever lasts longer than 24 hours.
- Your child has a temperature of 39.5°C (103°F) or greater.
- The fever does not come down after acetaminophen or ibuprofen is given.
- Your child has convulsions.
- Your child appears ill with other symptoms.

QUESTIONS:
If you have any questions regarding measles, mumps, or rubella or the MMR vaccine, please call your local Public Health office, or your health care provider.

For more information on immunization, please visit the websites of
- Immunize Canada at immunize.ca/en/default.aspx
- the Public Health Agency of Canada at phac-aspc.gc.ca
- the Canadian Paediatric Society at cps.ca
- 811 at https://811.novascotia.ca/