

# Varicella (Chicken Pox)

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## What is the Varicella Vaccine?

The varicella vaccine is a vaccine that protects against the varicella-zoster virus – the virus that causes chickenpox. The vaccine contains a weakened form of the virus, which stimulates the immune system to produce antibodies that can help prevent infection.

Chickenpox is a highly contagious viral infection that causes a rash, itching, fever, and other symptoms. While chickenpox is usually a mild illness, it can cause complications in some cases, particularly in people with weakened immune systems or pregnant women.

The varicella vaccine is highly effective at preventing chickenpox, and it has significantly reduced the number of chickenpox cases in the United States. While some people may still get chickenpox after receiving the vaccine, the illness is usually milder and has fewer complications. In addition, the vaccine has been shown to reduce the risk of developing shingles, a painful rash that occurs when the varicella-zoster virus reactivates later in life.

## What to Expect:

The Varicella vaccine is administered through an injection in your upper arm. After receiving the vaccine, it's common to experience some mild side effects, such as:

- Soreness, redness, or swelling at the injection site
- Fever
- Rash
- Headache
- Nausea or vomiting



These side effects are usually mild and go away on their own within a few days. In rare cases, more serious side effects can occur, such as an allergic reaction or seizures. If you experience any unusual symptoms after receiving the vaccine, it's important to seek medical attention right away.

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## **What If I am unsure if I have received the vaccine or have lost my immunization records?**

Serology testing, also known as antibody testing, is a type of diagnostic testing that measures the level of antibodies in a person's blood.

Antibodies are proteins that the body produces in response to an infection or vaccination. Serology testing can be used to determine whether someone has been infected with a particular virus or has developed immunity to a particular disease.

During a serology test, a sample of blood is collected from the person and analyzed in a laboratory. The test looks for specific antibodies in the blood that are associated with a particular infection or vaccine. If the test detects the antibodies, it indicates that the person has been infected with the virus or has developed immunity to the disease.

