

The general contraindication for all immunizations is a severe febrile illness. This precaution avoids adding the risk of adverse side effects from the vaccine to an already ill child or mistakenly identifying a symptom of the disease as having been caused by the vaccine. The presence of minor illnesses, such as the common cold, is not a contraindication. Live virus vaccines are generally not administered to anyone with an altered immune system, because multiplication of the virus may be enhanced, causing a severe vaccine-induced illness.

In general, live virus vaccines such as varicella and MMR should not be administered to persons who are severely immunocompromised ([National Center for Immunization and Respiratory Diseases, 2011](#)). Another contraindication to live virus vaccines (e.g., MMR and varicella) is the presence of recently acquired passive immunity through blood transfusions, immunoglobulin, or maternal antibodies. Administration of MMR and varicella should be postponed for a minimum of 3 months after passive immunization with immunoglobulins and blood transfusions (except washed red blood cells, which do not interfere with the immune response). Suggested intervals between administration of immunoglobulin preparations and MMR and varicella depend on the type of immune product and dosage. If the vaccine and immunoglobulin are given simultaneously because of imminent exposure to disease, the two preparations are injected at sites far from each other. Vaccination should be repeated after the suggested intervals unless there is serologic evidence of antibody production.

A final contraindication is a known allergic response to a previously administered vaccine or a substance in the vaccine. An anaphylactic reaction to a vaccine or its component is a true contraindication. MMR vaccines contain minute amounts of neomycin; measles and mumps vaccines, which are grown on chick embryo tissue cultures, are not believed to contain significant amounts of egg cross-reacting proteins. Therefore, only a history of anaphylactic reaction to neomycin, gelatin, or the vaccine itself is considered a contraindication to their use.

Pregnancy is a contraindication to MMR vaccines, although the risk of fetal damage is primarily theoretic. Breastfeeding is not a contraindication for any vaccine. The only vaccine virus that has