



Ministry of Health & Family Welfare  
Government of India

**MEASLES  
& RUBELLA  
VACCINATION CAMPAIGN**

**HANDBOOK**  
for Frontline Health Workers



**Frequently  
asked questions  
(FAQs) on  
MR vaccination  
campaign**



# What are measles/rubella diseases?

- **Measles** is a highly infectious disease causing illness and death due to complications in the form of diarrhea, pneumonia .
- **Rubella** is a mild yet highly contagious disease that can cause crippling birth defects or the death of the unborn child of an infected pregnant woman.

## What is congenital rubella syndrome (CRS)?

- **CRS** is a set of serious congenital defects a child may be born with when a pregnant woman gets rubella infection in her early pregnancy (usually in the first trimester), causing blindness, deafness, heart defects, mental retardation, liver disorders etc.

# Why is measles–rubella vaccine given?

- MR vaccine is given for preventing both measles and rubella disease in the child.
- To eliminate Measles and control rubella/CRS in the country

## Does this vaccine give lifelong protection?

- Yes, MR vaccine gives lifelong protection in most of the children
- Two doses of MR vaccine protects the child from both diseases

## **Does a combined vaccine of measles and rubella (MR) lead to any loss of efficacy of either vaccine?**

- No, efficacy of both vaccines remains the same as when administered separately.

## **Are there any side effects of MR vaccination on child?**

- MR vaccine is safe and administered worldwide under RI program as well as through MR vaccination campaigns.
- Millions of children have been vaccinated with this vaccine safely all around the world.

# How much diluent to be used for reconstitution of MR vaccine?

- **Use full quantity of supplied diluent for reconstitution of MR vaccine. e.g. for 10 dose MR diluent bundled with the vaccine**
- The reason for this is to take care of the unavoidable vaccine wastage that occurs due to:
  - some dead space in the hub and needle
  - sticking of the vaccine to the inner wall of the vaccine vial
- Therefore, it is important to draw the entire amount of diluent from the ampoule to reconstitute MR vaccine .

# What is MR campaign and why it is being conducted ?

- MR campaign is a special campaign to vaccinate all children of 9 months to <15 years age group with one dose of MR vaccine.
- The MR campaign dose is given to all targeted children, both immunized and unimmunized, irrespective of prior measles/rubella infection.
- The goal of MR campaign is to accelerate population immunity by reaching 100% target children with MR vaccine that will reduce cases and deaths from measles and disabilities from CRS.

# Where will the children be vaccinated during the campaign?

- All eligible children will be vaccinated at the following session sites:-
  - Schools : *Initial weeks of campaign*
  - Health sub-centres, anganwadi centres, fixed outreach sessions and mobile posts in villages and urban areas: *subsequent-following weeks of campaign*
  - *5<sup>th</sup> week/last week for sweeping/repeat activity for missed areas/pockets, based on coverage and monitoring (RCM)*

# Who should be vaccinated?

- All children who have completed 9 months of age and are below 15 years of age regardless of previous vaccination status with measles/rubella vaccine and regardless of measles/rubella infection in the past
- Malnourished children should be vaccinated on a priority basis, as they are more likely to have complications like diarrhea and pneumonia
- Children with minor illnesses such as mild respiratory infection, diarrhea, and low grade fever



# Who should NOT be vaccinated?

## **Do not vaccinate if the child has:**

- High fever or other serious disease (e.g.: unconsciousness, convulsions, etc).
- Hospitalized children.
- History of a severe allergic reaction to measles/rubella vaccine in the past

# Why MR and not MMR vaccination?

- Measles kills nearly 49,200 children every year in India.
- Rubella infection during pregnancy can cause abortion, still birth and may lead to multiple birth defects in the new born, like blindness/deafness heart defects (known as Congenital Rubella Syndrome)
- However, there is no enough evidence to suggest that mumps is a disease of public health importance.
- Therefore, MR vaccine is being introduced instead of MMR vaccine.

# What is the use of invitation cum vaccination card?

- Distribute cards to parents at least 7 days prior to the campaign
- The card is per child, so more than one may be given to each household.
- Ask household members to bring the cards to campaign site for vaccination.
- Invitation card will be used for recording vaccination also.
- Keep extra cards at session site, in case parents forget to bring it along.

## **Does the child need MR vaccination campaign dose even if she/he has had all her/his routine vaccinations?**

- Yes, the campaign dose will be administered to all the children falling between the age group of 9 months to <15 years of age, irrespective of any past history of disease or vaccination.
- MR campaign dose is in addition to RI dose.

A 14 year old girl is having periods. Should the girl get the MR vaccine during campaign?

- Yes, this girl should be immunized with the campaign MR vaccine.
- There is no harm in vaccinating girls who are having menstrual periods.

**An 11-month old child has got one dose of measles vaccine through routine immunization one week before start of campaign. Should the child get the campaign dose now?**

- Yes, this child should be immunized with the campaign MR dose too. There is no added risk of side effects because of the second dose. In addition, the child should be brought for routine 2<sup>nd</sup> dose of MR vaccine at 16-24 months of age.

**If a child received one dose of MR vaccine during the MR Campaign, should he/she receive the routine dose of measles/MR vaccine?**

- Yes, the child will receive routine doses of MR vaccine according to the National Immunization Schedule, irrespective of any MR campaign dose in the past.

# What should be the minimum time interval between a routine vaccination and campaign vaccination?

- If the campaign dose is due as per the guideline, it will be given irrespective of any gap between the last RI received by the child, as this is a one-time activity and there is no harm done to the child with an extra dose.
- However, following a campaign vaccination, for the next due RI dose there should be a minimum gap of 4 weeks as a standard recommendation between two doses of live injectable vaccines.



# **MR vaccine introduction in Routine Immunization**

# **When will MR vaccine be available for administration under routine immunization?**

- MR vaccine will be available for administration under routine immunization after the completion of MR Campaign.

## **Which child is eligible for MR vaccine under the RI programme?**

- Every child who is eligible for either first dose or second dose of measles vaccine in his/her RI schedule will be provided with combined MR vaccine.

# Revised National Immunization Schedule

Age	Vaccines given
Birth	BCG, OPV, Hepatitis B
6 Weeks	OPV 1, Pentavalent 1, Rota1*, fIPV1
10 weeks	OPV2, Pentavalent2, Rota2*
14 weeks	OPV3, Pentavalent3, Rota3*, fIPV2
9-12 months	<b>MR1</b> , JE1*
16-24 months	<b>MR2</b> , JE2*, DPT-B, OPV –B
5-6 years	DPT-B2
10 years	TT
16 years	TT
Pregnant Mother	TT1, 2 or TT Booster**

*\*in select states /districts only*

*\*\* one dose if previously vaccinated within 3 years*

# Can MR and JE vaccine be given together?

- Yes.
- In JE endemic districts, both MR and JE vaccine should be given together at the same time but on different arms.
- When for any reason vaccines couldn't be given at the same time/day, then a minimum gap of 4 weeks has to be maintained as a standard practice between any two live vaccines.

# Is it safe to give multiple injections at one visit?

- Yes, it is safe for child to receive multiple injections at one time.
- Many countries including India have immunization schedules where children receive multiple vaccine injections at one visit.

# Is there any evidence that multiple injections of vaccines may increase the risk of adverse events?

- No.
- Numerous studies have shown that giving multiple vaccinations during the same visit does not result in higher incidence of adverse events.

# Would it be safer to separate vaccine injections and spread them out?

- No,
- It is safer for child to receive all of his vaccinations at once. Spreading out vaccinations leaves babies unprotected for a longer time and the child may have to wait for a 4-week gap between two live vaccines.

# **If a child due for measles vaccine comes to the Routine Immunization session during MR campaign, should the child receive measles dose?**

- During MR campaign, measles vaccination in Routine Immunization will be withheld.
- No measles/MR vaccination will be done during RI.
- MR vaccine will be introduced in RI after completion of campaign.
- However, ANM should ensure that child receives MR campaign dose during the campaign period.



# **If a child received one dose of MR vaccine during the MR Campaign, should he/she receive the routine dose of MR vaccine?**

- Yes, the child should receive routine doses of MR vaccine according to the National Immunization Schedule, irrespective of any MR campaign dose in the past.

# What should be the minimum time interval between a routine vaccination and campaign vaccination?

- Following a campaign vaccination, for the next due RI dose there should be a minimum gap of 4 weeks as a standard recommendation between two doses of live injectable vaccines.

**If a child has received MR vaccine before 9 months of age, is it necessary to repeat the vaccine later?**

- According to the Immunization Schedule, the MR vaccine needs to be administered as MR-1 at 9-12 months of age and MR-2 at 16–24 months

# Till what age MR vaccine can be given to children under Routine Immunization?

- Two doses of MR vaccine should be given at 9-12 months and 16-24 months of age.
- However, if a child misses the scheduled dose, MR vaccine can be given till 5 years of age.



WCO-India web-page: <http://www.searo.who.int/india/topics/measles/FAQs/en/>