Varicella Virus Vaccine

Brand Names: US
Varivax

Brand Names: Canada
Varilrix; Varivax III

What is this drug used for?

- It is used to prevent chickenpox infection.

What do I need to tell my doctor BEFORE I take this drug?

- If you have an allergy to this drug or any part of this drug.
- If you are allergic to any drugs like this one, any other drugs, foods, or other substances. Tell your doctor about the allergy and what signs you had, like rash; hives; itching; shortness of breath; wheezing; cough; swelling of face, lips, tongue, or throat; or any other signs.
- If you have any of these health problems: Active TB (tuberculosis) that is not being treated, certain blood or bone marrow problems like leukemia or lymphoma, a fever, a weak immune system, or a disease that may cause a weak immune system like HIV or AIDS.
- If you are taking any drugs to suppress your immune system. This may be certain doses of steroids like prednisone. There are many drugs that can suppress your immune system. Ask your doctor or pharmacist if you are not sure.
- If a family member has had immune system problems.
- If you are pregnant or plan to get pregnant within the next 3 months. Do not take this drug if you are pregnant or if you are planning to get pregnant...
within the next 3 months.

- If you have had any of these within the past 5 months: Blood transfusion, plasma transfusion, immune globulin drugs like varicella-zoster immune globulin.

This is not a list of all drugs or health problems that interact with this drug.

Tell your doctor and pharmacist about all of your drugs (prescription or OTC, natural products, vitamins) and health problems. You must check to make sure that it is safe for you to take this drug with all of your drugs and health problems. Do not start, stop, or change the dose of any drug without checking with your doctor.

What are some things I need to know or do while I take this drug?

- Tell all of your health care providers that you take this drug. This includes your doctors, nurses, pharmacists, and dentists.
- This drug may not protect all people who use it. Talk with the doctor.
- Rarely, you can spread the chickenpox virus to others after you get this vaccine. When you are able to, avoid close contact with certain people like newborns, pregnant women who have not had chickenpox, and people with weak immune systems. Do this for up to 6 weeks after getting this vaccine. Talk with your doctor if you cannot avoid close contact with these people.
- Do not take aspirin or products like aspirin for at least 6 weeks after getting this vaccine. The chance of a very bad illness called Reye’s syndrome may be raised. Reye’s syndrome causes damage to the brain and liver.
- This drug may cause harm to the unborn baby if you take it while you are pregnant.
- If you get pregnant within 3 months after getting this drug, call your doctor right away.
- Tell your doctor if you are breast-feeding. You will need to talk about any risks to your baby.

What are some side effects that I need to call my
doctor about right away?

**WARNING/CAUTION:** Even though it may be rare, some people may have very bad and sometimes deadly side effects when taking a drug. Tell your doctor or get medical help right away if you have any of the following signs or symptoms that may be related to a very bad side effect:

- Signs of an allergic reaction, like rash; hives; itching; red, swollen, blistered, or peeling skin with or without fever; wheezing; tightness in the chest or throat; trouble breathing, swallowing, or talking; unusual hoarseness; or swelling of the mouth, face, lips, tongue, or throat.
- Rash that looks like chickenpox on the body or where the shot was given.
- Shingles.
- Shortness of breath.
- Wheezing.
- Rarely, other side effects have happened with this drug. It is not known if this drug caused these side effects. Call your doctor right away if you have easy bruising; red or purple, flat spots under the skin; pale skin; trouble walking; severe skin problems, or a skin infection. Call your doctor right away if you have a headache, fever, chills, very upset stomach or throwing up, stiff neck, seizures, you feel sleepy or confused, or if bright lights bother your eyes.

**What are some other side effects of this drug?**

All drugs may cause side effects. However, many people have no side effects or only have minor side effects. Call your doctor or get medical help if any of these side effects or any other side effects bother you or do not go away:

- Fever.
- Feeling fussy.
- Pain where the shot was given.
- Redness or swelling where the shot is given.
- Irritation where the shot is given.

These are not all of the side effects that may occur. If you have questions about side effects, call your doctor. Call your doctor for medical advice about side
effects.

You may report side effects to your national health agency.

**How is this drug best taken?**

Use this drug as ordered by your doctor. Read all information given to you. Follow all instructions closely.

- It is given as a shot into the fatty part of the skin.

**What do I do if I miss a dose?**

- Call your doctor to find out what to do.

**How do I store and/or throw out this drug?**

- If you need to store this drug at home, talk with your doctor, nurse, or pharmacist about how to store it.
- Keep all drugs in a safe place. Keep all drugs out of the reach of children and pets.
- Throw away unused or expired drugs. Do not flush down a toilet or pour down a drain unless you are told to do so. Check with your pharmacist if you have questions about the best way to throw out drugs. There may be drug take-back programs in your area.

**General drug facts**

- If your symptoms or health problems do not get better or if they become worse, call your doctor.
- Do not share your drugs with others and do not take anyone else’s drugs.
- Keep a list of all your drugs (prescription, natural products, vitamins, OTC) with you. Give this list to your doctor.
- Talk with the doctor before starting any new drug, including prescription or OTC, natural products, or vitamins.
- Some drugs may have another patient information leaflet. If you have any questions about this drug, please talk with your doctor, nurse, pharmacist, or other health care provider.
If you think there has been an overdose, call your poison control center or get medical care right away. Be ready to tell or show what was taken, how much, and when it happened.

**CDC Information**

Vaccine Information Statements (VIS) are made by the staff of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Each VIS gives information to properly inform the adult receiving the vaccine or, in the case of a minor, the child’s parent or legal representative about the risks and benefits of each vaccine. Before a doctor vaccinates a child or an adult, the provider is required by the National Childhood Vaccine Injury Act to give a copy of the VIS. You can also get foreign language versions.

https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/hcp/vis/vis-statements/varicella.html

**Consumer Information Use and Disclaimer**

This information should not be used to decide whether or not to take this medicine or any other medicine. Only the healthcare provider has the knowledge and training to decide which medicines are right for a specific patient. This information does not endorse any medicine as safe, effective, or approved for treating any patient or health condition. This is only a brief summary of general information about this medicine. It does NOT include all information about the possible uses, directions, warnings, precautions, interactions, adverse effects, or risks that may apply to this medicine. This information is not specific medical advice and does not replace information you receive from the healthcare provider. You must talk with the healthcare provider for complete information about the risks and benefits of using this medicine.

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