

VARICELLA VACCINE

VARICELLA or chickenpox is a generally benign disease caused by the varicella-zoster virus. By late adolescence 90% of children have had chickenpox. 15-20% of those infected have a reactivation of the dormant virus in a nerve ganglion to produce herpes zoster. Varicella sickens adults more than children. Varicella infections may cause secondary cellulites, ataxia, otitis media, bacteremia, osteomyelitis, septic arthritis, endocarditis, necrotizing fasciitis, toxic-shock like syndrome, Guillain Barre syndrome, Reye's syndrome, hepatitis ataxia, stroke and thrombocytopaenia. Death from pneumonia and encephalitis is rare.

PREGNANCY Maternal varicella between the 13th and 20th weeks gestation rarely causes a congenital varicella syndrome of low birth weight, skin scarring, eye abnormalities, limb hypoplasia, cortical atrophy and other abnormalities. Maternal infection in the five days before birth to two days after birth may cause a severe, often fatal, neonatal varicella infection.

RESPONSE TO IMMUNIZATION 97% of healthy adults receiving two doses of vaccine 1-2 months apart had detectable antibody five years later. The vaccine offers 70-90% protection against any varicella at all and 95% protection against severe varicella for at least 7-10 years. Any varicella that does develop after vaccination causes fewer than fifty lesions. The unvaccinated with varicella infection have several hundred lesions.

INDICATIONS for vaccination include susceptible health care workers.

CONTRAINDICATIONS to varicella vaccination include immunocomprimitation through disease or drug use. The immunocomprimitated must consult an infectious disease physician before receiving varicella vaccine. Prior anaphylaxis to the vaccine, neomycin or gelatin is a contraindication to vaccination. Pregnancy is a contraindication to vaccination; breastfeeding is not.

ADVERSE REACTIONS are simply mild injection site reactions in up to 20% of cases. Varicella-like lesions may arise all over the body, occurring from 5-26 days post vaccination in up to 5.5% of first doses. 15% of vaccines have a low-grade fever.

CONSENT

I have read this information and understand the benefits and the risks involved in receiving varicella vaccine. I have been given the opportunity to ask questions to clarify any misunderstandings that I might have had about this vaccine. I am not pregnant and do not intend to become pregnant within three months. I agree to the vaccine administration.

Name _____ Signature _____
Date _____ Witness _____