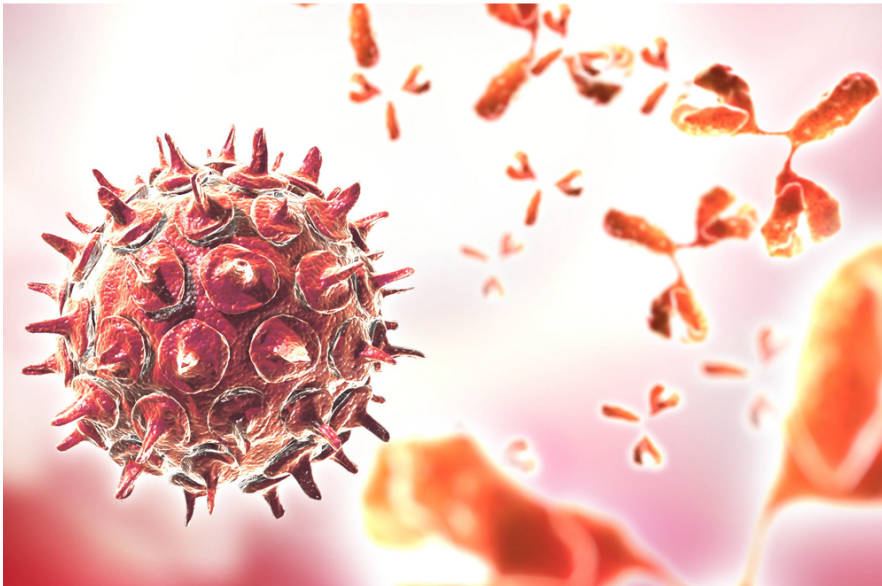




Chickenpox (Varicella) Vaccine



Overview

This vaccine protects you against the virus that causes chickenpox. Chickenpox causes an itchy rash of small red bumps all over your body. And it spreads easily from person to person. It can be very serious. But, you can prevent it by getting the vaccine.

How it works

How does the vaccine work? Well, it uses a small amount of weakened virus. When it's injected, your body creates antibodies to fight it off. These antibodies stay with you for the rest of your life. For most, the vaccine makes you immune to chickenpox. However, you can still get chickenpox after taking the vaccine. But, your symptoms are usually very mild.

How it's given

How is the vaccine given? It's usually a series of two shots. For young children, the first is given when a child is 12 to 15 months old. The second is given between the ages of 4 and 6. Teens and adults get two shots at least 28 days apart. The chickenpox vaccine may also be part of a combination vaccine. These protect you against more than one disease.

Who should get it

Who should get the chickenpox vaccine? It's recommended for all children at least 12 months old. Teens and adults who haven't gotten chickenpox or the vaccine should also get the vaccine. If you had a bad reaction to the first dose, you shouldn't take the second one. You should also wait to get the vaccine if you're pregnant, have a weak immune system, or are being treated for cancer. Talk to your doctor for more info.