

## Gelatine in the MMR vaccine

Processed (hydrolysed) porcine gelatine is included in some vaccines as a stabiliser. This type of processed gelatine is altered greatly through purification and modification. Vaccines containing gelatine are therefore usually acceptable to people who choose not to eat pork.

### **What is gelatine?**

Gelatine is a mixture of proteins formed when collagen from chicken, cattle, pigs and fish is hydrolysed. Collagen is present in tendons, ligaments, bones and cartilage. Gelatine used in medicines is manufactured according to strict hygiene and safety regulations.

### **About gelatine in medicines**

Gelatine is used in many different medicines, in the form of tablets, capsules and some vaccines. The only vaccine in the Norwegian Childhood Immunisation Programme that contains gelatine is the MMRVaxpro. For vaccines not included in the Childhood Immunisation Programme – check the ingredients in the product information.

### **Why use gelatine in vaccines?**

Hydrolysed gelatine is a stabiliser that preserves the properties of the vaccine over time (safety and efficacy). Compare to gelatine used in food, this type of gelatine is purified and broken down into tiny molecules called peptides.

### **What is the view of the Muslim faith about vaccines containing gelatine?**

In 2001, the World Health Organization (WHO) gathered more than 100 Islamic scholars to discuss the use of gelatine in vaccines. With their support, the WHO ascertained that this type of processed gelatine is so purified and modified that it has lost its association to pigs and is therefore acceptable to Muslims. More information is available: [www.immunize.org/talking-about-vaccines/porcine.pdf](http://www.immunize.org/talking-about-vaccines/porcine.pdf)

### **Is there an MMR vaccine without gelatine?**

If an individual chooses not to accept the MMRvaxpro because of the gelatine content, the MMR vaccine (Priorix) is available. Priorix does not contain gelatine. The vaccine is free and can be ordered from the Norwegian Institute of Public Health.

The Norwegian Institute of Public Health strongly recommends that children take all the vaccines offered in the Childhood Immunisation Programme to prevent serious illnesses. The MMR vaccine is given as two doses, at 15 months of age and during the 6th grade (about 11 years).

Contact your public health nurse if you have any questions.