

NEWS RELEASE

Public Health - Madison & Dane County

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More People in Dane County Getting Measles Immunization

Helping to Protect Community Against an Outbreak

Madison WI – March 3, 2015 - The recent outbreak of measles, starting in California and spreading to 17 states, has brought attention to the importance of immunizations. Since declaring the disease to be “eradicated” in 2000, the CDC has reported a steady increase in cases in recent years, and that most cases are in people who are not vaccinated. The good news in Dane County is that there has been an increase in the number of people getting immunized.

According to Cheryl Robinson, Immunization Program Supervisor with Public Health-Madison & Dane County (PHMDC), “compared to last year at this time, there has been a 38% increase in the number of MMR (measles, mumps, rubella) vaccinations given in Dane County. Measles can spread easily when people are not vaccinated. It is good news that parents are acting on advice to vaccinate their family against measles and other diseases. It not only protects their family, but also vulnerable members of the community who cannot be vaccinated, like babies who are too young to be immunized or those with medical conditions. The measles vaccine has been in use for over 50 years and is very safe and effective.”

To protect the public’s health and prevent further spread of the disease, PHMDC recommends that families check their immunization records and make sure all have received the recommended doses of the MMR vaccine, and other needed vaccines.

Two doses of this vaccine are needed for complete protection. Children should be given the first dose of MMR vaccine at 12 to 15 months of age. The second dose can be given 4 weeks later, but is usually given before the start of kindergarten at 4 to 6 years of age.

If you are not sure whether family members have received the MMR vaccination, check the [Wisconsin Immunization Registry](https://www.dhfwis.org/PR/portallInfoManager.do), at <https://www.dhfwis.org/PR/portallInfoManager.do> or call your health care provider.

Public Health offers free immunizations to uninsured adults and children, and children with Medical Assistance. Vaccination clinics are held in various locations and are by appointment only. For schedule/location information and to make an appointment, call (608) 266-4821 and see our website at <http://www.publichealthmdc.com/disease/immunizations/>.

Measles is still common in many parts of the world including some countries in Europe, Asia, the Pacific, and Africa. This means that unvaccinated travelers can bring the disease into the U.S. where it can spread when it reaches a community where groups of people are unvaccinated. Check the CDC travel website for information on immunizations needed for your specific destination. <http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/destinations/list>

For more detailed information about the measles see

<http://www.cdc.gov/measles/index.html>