



State of Wisconsin

Department of Health and Family Services

Jim Doyle, Governor

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May 14, 2008

For Immediate Release

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State Health Officials Urge Measles Vaccine Before Traveling Abroad

State health officials today urged people planning international travel to ensure they are current with their measles and other immunizations.

“Immunization against measles and rubella is especially vital for adults and children who are planning to travel overseas since measles cases have been identified in other parts of the world, including Europe and China,” said Dr. Sheri Johnson, State Health Officer. “The cases in Wisconsin and eight other states provide a timely reminder not only of the immunization’s effectiveness, but also the absolute necessity to be properly vaccinated against disease.”

Measles can be a serious, even fatal disease. State health officials strongly recommend that people get immunized against measles, if they haven’t already. The vaccine is given as the MMR vaccine (measles, mumps, rubella) and it takes effect after 2-3 weeks. Two doses normally provide lifelong immunity.

Children should receive two doses--the first at 12-15 months of age and the second between 4-6 years of age. Also, adults who have never had the MMR vaccine or are unsure of their vaccine history can still get immunized.

Most adults born before 1957 are probably immune to measles or rubella by having acquired the disease naturally. For most adults born in or after 1957, we recommend one dose. Only those who work in healthcare, who attend colleges/universities or who travel internationally need two doses. People who are unsure about their measles or rubella disease status or vaccine history are advised to seek vaccination.

The first and best line of defense against disease is immunization. Immunization works, and it has been proven safe. If you have not already immunized yourself and your children, please take steps to do so immediately, especially if you plan to travel abroad. Please contact your physician or local public health department to be immunized.

For more information, go to:

Measles <http://dhfs.wisconsin.gov/communicable/factsheets/measles.htm>

Rubella <http://dhfs.wisconsin.gov/communicable/factsheets/Rubella.htm>

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Measles Update <http://www.cdc.gov/Features/MeaslesUpdate/>

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