MEDIA RELEASE

JEFFERSON COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE

Public Health Facility, 531 Meade Street, Watertown, New York 13601

Contact: Lisa Lagos, 315.786.3735 November 10, 2026

# Jefferson County Public Health Service Recommends Infants Receive a Dose of Measles, Mumps and Rubella (MMR) Vaccine Between 6 and 11 Months of Age

**Watertown, NY** – The Jefferson County Public Health Service (JCPHS) is alerting the community that measles cases are continuing to be prevalent in New York State and neighboring counties, including Lewis, Oswego, and St. Lawrence Counties. Measles is a highly contagious virus and spreads rapidly among those who are unvaccinated. Being unvaccinated increases risks for severe complications, hospitalization and death. Due to this continued measles outbreak status, the JCPHS is now advising families to receive an early MMR vaccine dose for infants at age 6 months – 11 months. Normally, the initial dose of MMR vaccine is given at 12-15 months of age.

JCPHS Medical Director Stephen T. Grybowski, MD stated, "Measles is a serious virus with a very high infection rate in unvaccinated populations. We are advising all families to vaccinate their children with the MMR vaccine at age 6 months up to 11 months. This is considered 'dose zero,' and the regular two-dose series at 12 months and 4 years will follow. Prior to 6 months of age, infants generally have immune protection from maternal antibodies, if the mother was vaccinated."

Stephen A. Jennings, Jefferson County Director of Public Health stated, "Due to the continued prevalence of measles surrounding Jefferson County, and the opportunity for unknown exposure to occur as people travel into Jefferson County to work or visit, we must take appropriate precautions. Besides the risk of an unvaccinated infant encountering someone contagious with measles in their daily life, there is a risk of exposure in urgent and emergency care facilities, especially with seasonal respiratory illness well underway."

Mr. Jennings continued that "while there remains only one confirmed case of measles in Jefferson County, the department is actively monitoring the emerging situation, working in close coordination with the New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH), the local health departments of our neighboring counties, and with our healthcare system. With measles cases so closely surrounding our County, we feel it is important to update our vaccination recommendations accordingly. We will continue to work with the NYSDOH and keep the community informed about the prevalence of measles in our region and urge anyone who is not vaccinated to talk with their healthcare provider or call our office for more information."

Contact your child's healthcare provider to schedule vaccination or contact our office to schedule at our weekly Immunization Clinic at (315) 786-3730.

Learn more about measles by visiting: https://www.jeffersoncountyny.gov/departments/publichealth/measles

For up-to-date information on measles activity in NYS, broken down by county, go to the NYSDOH Measles Dashboard:
https://www.health.ny.gov/diseases/communicable/measles/data.htm