



STATE OF TENNESSEE
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
COMMUNICABLE AND ENVIRONMENTAL DISEASE SERVICES SECTION
IMMUNIZATION PROGRAM
VACCINES FOR CHILDREN (VFC) PROGRAM
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VFC PROGRAM- Measles Advisory

Date: May 6, 2011
To: All VFC Providers
From: Kelly L. Moore, MD, MPH, Medical Director, Tennessee Immunization Program
Subject: **Measles Mumps Rubella (MMR) vaccine for infant travelers**

The US is on track to record the largest number of measles cases in recent years, associated with travel to Western Europe and other parts of the world that have experienced major measles outbreaks in recent months. These outbreaks are the result of poor MMR immunization rates in these countries. Measles has been eliminated from the US for several years as a result of high levels of routine immunization, and all US outbreaks are triggered by an ill traveler. Tennessee has reported 3 travel-associated cases to date in 2011, one in an infant.

Measles is the most contagious vaccine-preventable virus; it spreads through the air and can infect a susceptible person up to 2 hours after the case leaves a room.

Measles begins with a fever, runny nose, cough and the patient has conjunctivitis (pinkeye) and bluish white spots on the buccal mucosa (Koplik's spots). The rash develops 1-4 days after other symptoms and begins on the head, spreading down the body. Pneumonia and diarrhea may complicate illness, and in 1/1000 cases, encephalitis may develop.

The CDC has special MMR immunization recommendations for all infants and young children who must travel outside the United States:

- Infants <6 months: cannot be vaccinated, non-essential international travel is discouraged.
- **Infants 6-11 months: 1 dose of MMR before travel** – note in chart the reason for early administration. **This extra dose of VFC vaccine is approved** for VFC-eligible infants.
 - **After the 1st birthday, such infants still need 2 doses of MMR vaccine**, at least 28 days apart, to be fully immunized and meet school requirements.
- **Children 12 months and up: 2 doses spaced by at least 28 days, before travel.**
 - If no time for both doses, be sure the child has had one dose. Two MMR doses given on this accelerated schedule *after* the 1st birthday and at least 28 days apart meet all school requirements: no further doses will be necessary.

If you see a patient that you suspect of having measles, especially if the patient has recently traveled internationally or has contact with a sick international traveler, isolate the patient in a room with a closed door, institute airborne precautions and call local public health immediately.

Please contact our program with any questions. CDC Travel Website: www.cdc.gov/travel