



Tom Barrett  
Mayor

Bevan K. Baker, CHE  
Commissioner of Health

Administration

Frank P. Zeidler Municipal Building, 841 North Broadway, 3rd Floor, Milwaukee, WI 53202-3653 phone (414) 286-3521 fax (414) 286-5990  
web site: [www.milwaukee.gov/health](http://www.milwaukee.gov/health)

For Immediate Release:  
April 19, 2006

Media Contact: Raquel M. Filmanowicz  
414-286-3175 (Office)  
414-708-5367 (Cell)

## **Update on City of Milwaukee Health Department Mumps Outbreak Investigation Commissioner of Health Encourages People to get Vaccinated**

Commissioner of Health Bevan K. Baker held a news conference today following the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) media briefing on the national mumps outbreak. CDC Director Dr. Julie Gerberding described this outbreak as the largest in the USA in 20 years. The CDC reports over 1,000 confirmed cases in Midwestern U.S. with 15 states implicated.

The CDC has committed 25,000 doses of mumps vaccine (MMR) to Iowa and just announced that Merck & Co. Inc. has donated an additional 25,000 doses to the CDC, which will be distributed to other affected states. Locally, Milwaukee's mumps case count rose today to 18, which includes confirmed, probable and suspect cases. As a result of the increased number of cases being reported to the MHD, the scope of the investigation has now broadened outside U.W-Milwaukee to the larger community.

"The complexion of the mumps outbreak here in Milwaukee is consistent with regional outbreaks in that it has emerged from institutional settings," said Bevan K. Baker. "We are encouraging people who have not been vaccinated to visit their primary care physician to get vaccinated."

The Health Department is working with various organizations to assure appropriate risk communication within institutional settings such as universities, colleges, schools, daycares and to healthcare workers. Evidence continues to show that vaccine is highly effective in 90-95% of persons who have been fully vaccinated with 2 doses of the MMR vaccine. Therefore, ensuring that persons are up-to-date on their MMR vaccination is the best prevention and strategy in reducing mumps transmission in community.

The City of Milwaukee has substantially lower immunization rates compared to the rest of the state. Vaccination completion rates in some schools are as low as 42% compared to 80-90% state-wide. The City of Milwaukee Health Department in partnership with the District Attorney's Office is in the midst of its annual immunization compliance requests with MPS students. Over 22,000 letters have been sent to parents regarding school immunization compliance.

Mumps is a contagious viral disease that is spread through saliva and respiratory droplets (coughing, sneezing or talking) upon close contact with infected individuals. Symptoms can include swelling of the salivary glands in the cheek and jaw area, low grade fever, muscle pain and headache. Severe complications for a fraction of persons who get mumps include testicular inflammation, miscarriages in pregnant women, deafness and encephalitis and meningitis (swelling of the brain and spinal cord). Mumps can affect any person of any age, especially those who have not been vaccinated or have not had a previous history of infection. Children are recommended to be vaccinated between 12 months and 6 years of age through two doses of a combination of Measles, Mumps and Rubella (MMR) vaccine.

For more information visit the Health Department website at [www.milwaukee.gov/health](http://www.milwaukee.gov/health) or call the automated mumps hotline at 414-286-3616.

###