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**PRESS RELEASE-For Immediate Release**

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**Vaccination is the Best Protection Against Measles**

TWIN FALLS- With the confirmation of measles in 11 states, South Central Public Health District (SCPHD) advises people to verify that they and their children are current on their measles (MMR) vaccinations. Vaccination is the best protection against measles.

The measles, a highly contagious virus, causes rash, a cough, runny nose, eye irritation, and fever. Symptoms appear one to three weeks after exposure. The virus can lead to ear infections, pneumonia, seizures, brain damage, and death. Measles spreads easily through coughing and sneezing.

“The measles virus is highly contagious since it can remain active on infected surfaces for up to two hours,” said Tanis Maxwell, SCPHD Epidemiology Manager. “Measles is so contagious that if one person has it, 90% of the people close to that person who are not vaccinated will also become infected with the measles virus.”

The measles vaccine requires two doses for 99% effectiveness. Children take the first dose when they’re 12 to 15 months old. At least 28 days must separate the two doses, but children typically take the second dose between the ages of 4 and 6. Adults should receive at least one dose of measles vaccine unless they have been previously immunized, were born prior to 1957, have been diagnosed by a doctor with measles, or have other medical contraindications for the vaccine. Pregnant women should wait until after giving birth to get the vaccine.

If your vaccination records show a need for updates, you can make an appointment by calling the SCPHD clinic in your area. Immunizations are available by appointment at SCPHD offices in:

- Bellevue: 208-788-4335
- Gooding: 208-934-4477
- Jerome: 208-324-8838
- Mini-Cassia: 208-678-8221
- Twin Falls: 208-737-5966

For more information on measles and SCPHD's immunization fees and clinic schedules, visit [phd5.idaho.gov](http://phd5.idaho.gov).

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