



**Health, Seniors and Long-Term Care
Public Health**

300 Carlton Street
Winnipeg, Manitoba Canada R3B 3M9

February 9, 2026

RE: Maximizing protection for infants against measles

Dear Health Care Provider,

The number of measles cases in Manitoba continues to rise. There is ongoing widespread community transmission of measles in the Rural Municipalities (RMs) of Stanley, Rhineland, Thompson, Dufferin and Roland. Individuals that live in, travel to, or have close contacts in the RMs listed above are at high risk of exposure to measles.

Infants living in the RMs listed above are strongly recommended to receive an early dose of the *measles, mumps, rubella* (MMR) vaccine if eligible. Infants are at an increased risk for measles-related complications, including subacute sclerosing panencephalitis (SSPE), a progressive and fatal brain condition that can occur around ten years after measles infection.

Since February 1, 2025, there have been 22 reported hospitalizations, with 16 of those hospitalized being under the age of 10 years, including for reasons of difficulty breathing (needing supplemental oxygen support), pneumonia and dehydration. There have also been nine cases of measles in pregnant individuals and one case of congenital measles in Manitoba. Measles occurring during pregnancy has been associated with miscarriage, premature delivery and babies born with low birth weight.

Current eligibility for an early dose of the MMR vaccine includes infants aged 6 months to under 12 months who fit into one or more of the following categories:

- are travelling to a measles endemic country; OR
- reside in Southern Health-Santé Sud (SH-SS) or Interlake Eastern (IERHA); OR
- travel regularly to AND have close contact with residents of SH-SS or IERHA.

Note that the early dose must be administered as MMR since the *measles, mumps, rubella and varicella* (MMRV) vaccine is not recommended for use in infants less than 12 months of age. Additionally, infants receiving an early dose of MMR should still receive 2 doses of MMRV after their first birthday (and at least 4 weeks after the previous dose of measles-containing vaccine) to ensure long lasting immunity.

Health care providers are asked to offer immunization as appropriate to maximize protection against measles.

For more information: <https://www.gov.mb.ca/health/publichealth/diseases/measles.html>.

Please share this information with all colleagues at your facility/clinic.

Sincerely,

"Original Signed by"

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