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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**WESTCHESTER COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT OBSERVES**  
**NATIONAL INFANT IMMUNIZATION WEEK, APRIL 22-28, 2001**

To highlight the importance of immunizing children before their second birthdays, Westchester County will observe National Infant Immunization Week, April 22-28, 2001.

"Across the country, approximately one in four children is not fully immunized," said Joshua Lipsman, M.D, M.P.H., Commissioner of Health for Westchester County. "These children could be at unnecessary risk of contracting one of ten childhood diseases - polio, measles, rubella, diphtheria, pertussis (whooping cough), tetanus, mumps, Hib disease (a major cause of bacterial meningitis), varicella (chickenpox), and hepatitis B," he continued.

An active immunization program should begin during a child's first year of life (by 2 months of age), because childhood diseases are highly communicable and especially dangerous to infants. New York State law requires that children have these immunizations before they can attend a daycare center, nursery, public or private school.

In a mailing to Westchester County physicians and health care providers this week, the Westchester County Department of Health urged doctors to take a close look at their immunization practices in pursuit of the national goal to achieve full immunization of at least 90% of all two year old children living in Westchester County. Professional and patient education materials were also enclosed with the letter.

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To encourage parents to immunize their children, the Westchester County Department of Health provides free childhood immunizations to eligible County residents at its four district offices located in: White Plains, Rye/Port Chester, New Rochelle and Yonkers.

For additional information about childhood immunizations, call the Westchester County Department of Health at (914) 813-5000, or visit the Health Department's website at [www.westchestergov.com/health](http://www.westchestergov.com/health)

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