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## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Date:** Monday, April 26, 2010  
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## **THE PUTNAM COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH TO OBSERVE NATIONAL INFANT IMMUNIZATION WEEK**

Brewster - Each year, thousands of children become ill from diseases that could have been prevented by basic childhood immunizations. Countless more miss time from day care and school because they are under-immunized or inappropriately immunized.

During the week of April 24- May 1, 2010 the Putnam County Department of Health will observe National Infant Immunization Week (NIIW), a Centers for Disease Control and Prevention initiative designed to raise awareness about the importance of childhood immunizations.

Vaccines are among the most successful and cost-effective public health tools available for preventing disease and death. They not only help protect vaccinated individuals, but also help protect entire communities by preventing and reducing the spread of infectious diseases. Infants are particularly vulnerable to infectious diseases; that is why it is critical to protect them through immunization. Each day, nearly 12,000 babies are born in the United States who will need to be immunized against 14 vaccine-preventable diseases before age two.

Immunizations are one of the most important ways parents can protect their children against serious diseases. Parents are encouraged to talk to their healthcare provider to ensure that their infant is up-to-date on immunizations.

Healthcare providers play a critical role in educating parents about the importance of immunization and ensuring that infants are fully immunized. Because of the success of vaccines in preventing disease in the United States, parents are often unaware that their children are at risk for so many serious and life-threatening diseases. Vaccine-preventable diseases are at an all-time low in the United States. However, these diseases still exist and continued vaccination is necessary to protect everyone from potential outbreaks.

Immunizations are extremely safe. Vaccines are thoroughly tested before being approved for public use and monitored carefully by doctors, researchers, and public health officials. Vaccines not only prevent disease, they reduce the costs associated with missed time from work, doctor visits, and hospitalizations.

The Putnam County Department of Health holds immunization clinics at various times and locations throughout the county. Children up to 19 years of age can receive the required vaccinations at the Health Department's clinics if they meet eligibility requirements. Call (845) 278-6086 for dates, times, and location of clinics.