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MEASLES OUTBREAKS PROMPT TRAVEL AND VACCINE REMINDERS
PUBLIC HEALTH OFFICIALS URGE TRAVELERS TO PROTECT THEMSELVES

STOCKTON (April 7, 2014). When planning for future international travel, make sure to include plans for keeping you and your family healthy. Your need for travel vaccinations depends on your immunization history, your health status, the specific areas you plan to visit, the time of year, and whether any outbreaks of disease have recently occurred.

Many vaccine-preventable diseases, now rarely seen in the United States (U.S.), are still common in other parts of the world. Getting vaccinated before you travel is the best and easy way to protect yourself and your loved ones against serious diseases such as tetanus, hepatitis, meningitis, rabies, yellow fever, typhoid fever and measles. Since many vaccines take time to provide full protection and some vaccines must be given in a series that can take several days or weeks, try to schedule a doctor's visit 4-6 weeks before your trip. Review your family’s vaccination history to make sure everyone is up-to-date on their routine vaccinations, including Tdap (tetanus, diphtheria, and pertussis), MMR (measles, mumps, rubella), Hepatitis B, Hepatitis A and Polio, as well as any required or recommended vaccines for travel to other countries.

Currently in California, measles is a growing health concern related to international travel. The latest report from the California Department of Public Health confirmed 51 measles cases so far this year; compared with just four reported by this time last year. Measles remains a common, serious and highly contagious disease in many parts of the world, including the Philippines, India and other areas in Europe, Asia, the Pacific, and Africa. According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), each year, measles infects about 20 million people and kills about 164,000 people worldwide; and 100,000 of these deaths are children. Anyone traveling overseas may be exposed to measles and could become ill if they have never had measles or have not been properly vaccinated. Measles can come into the U.S. easily through infected visitors or through those returning to the U.S. from international travel. Infected individuals can spread the disease and spark outbreaks among pockets of unvaccinated people in the U.S., including infants and young children. If you are in an airport, airplane, train, bus or other mass transit vehicle, other people can expose you to the disease.

Measles is spread by contact with an infected person, through coughing and sneezing. After an infected person leaves a location, the virus remains contagious for up to 2 hours on surfaces and in the air. Infected individuals are generally contagious four days before and four days after a rash first appears.

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Symptoms can take about 10 to 12 days to appear. While measles is probably best known for its full-body, reddish-brown rash, the first symptoms of the infection are usually a hacking cough, runny nose, high fever, small white spots inside the mouth and red, watery eyes. The most serious complications are severe diarrhea, ear infections, pneumonia, blindness, and encephalitis (swelling of the brain), which may lead to death. Women infected while pregnant are at risk for severe complications, including miscarriage or preterm delivery. Call your doctor immediately if you suspect measles.

**STEPS TRAVELERS CAN TAKE TO PROTECT THEMSELVES AND OTHERS AGAINST MEASLES:**

1. **Before any international travel:**
   - Contact your doctor and tell him or her where you will be traveling overseas. Review your immunization history and determine which vaccines you will need.
   - International travelers who cannot show that they were vaccinated as children and who have never had measles should be vaccinated for their own protection and to prevent importation of the measles virus into the U.S. Measles vaccines available in the U.S. are the measles-mumps-rubella (MMR) and the measles-mumps-rubella-varicella (MMRV) vaccines. These measles vaccines are safe and effective.
     - In the U.S., a measles vaccine is not usually given to infants younger than 12 months old. But if there’s a measles outbreak, or an infant will be traveling outside the U.S., the vaccine may be given when the baby is 6-11 months old, followed by the usual measles vaccine at 12-15 months and 4-6 years.
     - Children 12 months of age or older should have 2 doses separated by at least 28 days.
     - Adolescents and adults who have neither had measles nor been vaccinated should get 2 doses separated by at least 28 days.

2. **During travel abroad:**
   - Practice good hygiene and cleanliness
     - Wash your hands often. If soap and water aren’t available, clean your hands with hand sanitizer (containing at least 60% alcohol).
     - Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth.
     - Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your sleeve (not your hands) when coughing or sneezing.
     - Try to avoid close contact or sharing eating utensils or cups with people who are sick.
   - Travelers who develop fever and other symptoms of measles while still abroad should get prompt medical attention before returning to the U.S.

3. **After you return from overseas:**
   - Monitor your health and your family’s health for 3 weeks after you return.
   - If you or your children get sick with a fever and/or rash, call your doctor.
   - Be sure to tell your doctor about your travels and the countries you visited. Your travel history helps the doctor think about diseases that might not occur in the U.S. anymore.
   - Avoid contact with other people if you are sick.

For more information about travelling abroad, visit the CDC website at [http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/](http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/). On the CDC’s travel section, you can check for current travel notices and outbreaks and also enter your destinations to receive information about vaccines to discuss with your doctor.

**Attachment - graphics**

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VISITING ANOTHER COUNTRY? PROTECT YOUR FAMILY.

THINK MEASLES.

Measles is widespread in places like Europe, Africa, Asia, India, and the Philippines.

BEFORE YOU TRAVEL
Tell your doctor where you are traveling. Babies and children may need measles protection at a younger age than usual.

AFTER YOU TRAVEL
Call your doctor if anyone gets a fever and rash within 3 weeks of returning from your trip. Describe where you traveled.

Talk with your doctor if you are planning an international trip.

For more information go to www.cdc.gov/travel.
Health Advisory: Measles

Measles spreads easily and can cause serious illness.

If you get fever and a rash in the next 3 weeks...

Call a doctor. Tell the doctor that you traveled.

For more information:
- Call 800-CDC-INFO (232-4636)
- Visit www.cdc.gov/travel

San Joaquin County Public Health Services
Healthy Future

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
HEALTH ADVISORY: MEASLES

Measles spreads easily and can cause serious illness.

Get vaccinated to prevent measles.

Protect yourself from measles.

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- Visit www.cdc.gov/travel