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*DIPATTAMENTON SALUT PUPBLEKO YAN SETBISION SUSIAT*



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**MEASLES AND PERTUSSIS IN THE REGION**

Following recent confirmation of pertussis (whooping cough) in Hawaii, and a measles outbreak and cases of whooping cough occurring in the Philippines, the Department of Public Health and Social Services (DPHSS) is advising travelers to remain up to date on their vaccinations.

As of April, 2024, the Hawaii Department of Health have confirmed 11 cases of pertussis. Meanwhile, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) reported that Philippines is experiencing an outbreak of over 500 measles cases and some deaths in the Bangsamoro region, and cases of pertussis occurring in parts of Luzon and Visayas.

As of May 2024, there have been no recently confirmed cases of measles or pertussis on Guam.

**Measles** is a highly contagious viral disease. It is primarily spread by person to person contact via large respiratory droplets. Symptoms are characterized by a generalized rash lasting 3 days or longer, with fever (101<sup>0</sup> F or higher) and cough, or coryza (runny nose), or conjunctivitis (red eyes).

**Pertussis** is a highly contagious respiratory infection caused by bacteria. It can cause severe coughing fits (up to 10 weeks or more), followed by a high-pitched "whoop" sound when breathing in. Vomiting and exhaustion may also follow. Pertussis can lead to serious complications, especially in infants, such as pneumonia, dehydration, seizures, and brain damage. Some infants may not cough at all. Instead, they may have apnea (life-threatening pauses in breathing) or struggle to breathe.

To find out if the area you are traveling to has an outbreak of either measles or pertussis, or other communicable diseases, please check the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC's) travel notice portal at <https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/notices>.

**For Travelers**

"While traveling to any destination or areas where either measles or pertussis is spreading, please make sure your shot record is up to date with the MMR vaccine for measles and the DTaP or Tdap vaccine for pertussis," said DPHSS Chief Medical Officer Dr. Robert Leon Guerrero. If a traveler needs a vaccine, DPHSS recommends getting vaccinated at least at least 2 weeks before your trip. If your trip is less than 2 weeks away DPHSS still recommends to get at least one vaccine dose.

To learn more about what vaccines are needed for each country, please visit, <https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/destinations/list> and contact your primary physician if your or anyone in your family may need to be vaccinated.

While on travel, the DPHSS also encourages to protect yourself and family members by minimizing exposure (close contact) to persons who have cold symptoms or cough illness. The DPHSS also recommends to practice the following steps to help prevent the spread of disease: cover your mouth when coughing or sneezing, and to wash your hands often.

**Recommendations from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) for Measles and Pertussis**

| MMR vaccine recommendations for Measles                      |                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|--------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Children</b>                                              | All children should receive two doses: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• First dose given at 12-15 months of age, and</li><li>• Second dose at 4-6 years of age or at least 28 days after dose #1</li></ul> |
| <b>Students at post-high school educational institutions</b> | Students without evidence of measles immunity need two doses, with dose #2 given no earlier than 28 days after the first dose.                                                                                    |
| <b>Adults</b>                                                | All persons born during or after 1957 should have documentation of at least one dose given on or after the first birthday.                                                                                        |

| DTaP or Tdap vaccine recommendations for Pertussis |                                                                    |                                                                                                                                                          |
|----------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Age Group                                          | Recommended Vaccine                                                | Recommended Schedule                                                                                                                                     |
| < 7 years old                                      | Diphtheria, tetanus and acellular pertussis ( <b>DTaP</b> )        | One dose at each of the following ages: 2,4,6 and 15-18 months and 4-6 years.                                                                            |
| 7-10 years old                                     | Tetanus diphtheria and acellular pertussis vaccine ( <b>Tdap</b> ) | Children who are not fully vaccinated with DTaP should get a single dose.                                                                                |
| 11-18 years old                                    |                                                                    | A single dose, preferably at age 11-12 years old                                                                                                         |
| 19 years old                                       |                                                                    | Adults who have not received Tdap previously or for whom vaccination status is unknown should receive a single dose.                                     |
| Pregnant women                                     |                                                                    | One dose during each pregnancy (preferably during 27-36 weeks' gestation). If Tdap is not given during pregnancy, administer immediately after delivery. |

MMR, DTaP and Tdap vaccines funded by DPHSS through the Vaccines For Children (VFC) Program are for children 18 years and under who are Not Insured, enrolled in Medicaid or Underinsured. Individuals with private health insurance must contact their primary healthcare provider for a vaccine availability.

These vaccines are available for VFC eligible children at the following DPHSS locations:

**Northern Region Community Health Center (NRCHC) and Southern Region Community (SRCHC):**

- To schedule an appointment to receive the vaccine individuals can call the NRCHC by calling: 671-635-7412/7456/4435 or the SRCHC by calling 671-828-7517/7518.

**Bureau of Family Health and Nursing Services (BFHNS), located in the NRCHC:**

- Individuals can call BFHNS at 671-634-7408 for more information for clinic hours and location.

We appreciate your assistance in taking precautionary measures to protect yourself and the health of the community.

Should you have any questions, please call the Immunization Program at (671) 735-7143.

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