

Mission:  
To protect, promote & improve the health  
of all people in Florida through integrated  
state, county & community efforts.



Rick Scott  
Governor

John H. Armstrong, MD, FACS  
State Surgeon General & Secretary

Vision: To be the Healthiest State in the Nation

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## **WORLD IMMUNIZATION WEEK HIGHLIGHTS IMPORTANCE OF VACCINATION BEFORE TRAVELING ABROAD**

**TALLAHASSEE**—Today begins World Immunization Week 2015 (April 24–30), and the Florida Department of Health is proud to join the rest of the world in promoting better vaccination rates. This awareness week is also a time to recognize the importance of proper vaccinations before travel to other countries.

“Routine immunizations are instrumental for keeping children, families and communities healthy in all countries and in preventing the spread of vaccine-preventable diseases through global travel,” said State Surgeon General and Secretary of Health Dr. John Armstrong. “Improving vaccination rates around the world improves our chances of one day eradicating life-threatening contagious diseases.”

Immunization prevents illness, disability and death from vaccine-preventable diseases including cervical cancer, diphtheria, hepatitis B, measles, mumps, pertussis, pneumonia, polio, rotavirus, rubella and tetanus. An estimated 2 to 3 million deaths are prevented each year through immunization, yet 21.8 million infants around the world are still lacking basic vaccines.

To further prevent the introduction and spread of vaccine-preventable diseases, preparation for foreign travel should include a visit to a healthcare provider to talk about health safety for upcoming travel destinations.

Before departing for a trip outside the United States, ask about:

- Setting up an appointment for immunization four to six weeks in advance of departure;
- Routine vaccinations recommended or required for entry into specific countries;
- Personal health issues, which may increase your risks for disease or complications; and
- A personal immunization record card of immunization dates.

For information about immunizations, please visit [www.immunizeflorida.org](http://www.immunizeflorida.org) or contact your county health department. Health care providers may also sign up to access the statewide immunization registry at [www.flshots.com](http://www.flshots.com) to keep an online record of their patients' immunization records. World Immunization Week is an observance celebrated by the World Health Organization each year during the last week of April. In 2014, more than 180

countries, territories and areas marked the week with activities including vaccination campaigns, training workshops, round-table discussions and public information campaigns.

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