

**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

April 23, 2015

Dear Faith Based Organization:

The Florida Department of Health is raising awareness about the importance of individuals receiving recommended vaccinations prior to traveling internationally. Vaccinations are safe and provide the best protection from acquiring diseases while in another country. Receiving the appropriate vaccination prior to travel is important for your health as well as the health of your family, co-workers and community back home.

Immunizations can protect you and your family from many diseases common in other countries. Measles outbreaks have been reported in Europe, Africa, and Asia. Measles is a serious viral disease that is easily spread through the air by breathing, coughing, or sneezing. The measles virus can remain in an environment for up to two hours after a measles infected person leaves the area. Prior to travel infants 6 months through 11 months of age should have at least one dose of measles-containing vaccine. Children 12 months of age or older should have two doses, separated by at least 28 days. Adults should review their vaccination records to ensure they are up-to-date with two doses of measles-containing vaccine.

Preparation for foreign travel should include a visit to your healthcare professional to talk about health safety at your travel destination for you and your travel companions. Immunizing before your trip will help prevent introduction of vaccine-preventable diseases into your community upon return home. Ask your healthcare professional about:

- An appointment for immunization 4-6 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.
- A personal immunization record card of immunization dates.

Information for travelers can also be found on the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) travel website (<http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/>) or find information regarding specific countries (<http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/destinations/list>). These pages have updated information regarding travel notices and immunization recommendations.

Travel vaccinations may be available from the local Florida Department of Health in your county. To find more information about immunization or to locate your local county health department please visit <http://www.floridahealth.gov/programs-and-services/county-health-departments/find-a-county-health-department/index.html>.

Sincerely,

Celeste M. Philip, MD, MPH  
Deputy Secretary for Health &  
Deputy State Health Officer for Children's Medical  
Services

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