



MINISTRY OF HEALTH MALAYSIA

The Travel Health Advisory for Measles and Polio

The following information regarding vaccine preventable disease will help you to stay healthy on your trip.

Measles

Measles is a highly contagious viral disease. Malaysia is aiming to achieve elimination of measles by 2018. In ensuring that the target is achieved, Malaysia has introduced two doses measles vaccination for children aged 12 months and 7 years old since 2004. It is important for the measles vaccination coverage to be high (above 95%) to confer herd immunity, which means that the protection also covers the small group in the population who are not eligible to be vaccinated, such as immunocompromised patients who have been on chemotherapy or who underwent organ transplantation.

As of 2014, Malaysia is still endemic with measles. Although the reported national vaccination coverage remains high, the high population movement and presence of migrants remain as challenges in achieving the elimination target.

Similarly in other countries in Western Pacific Region, American and Europe Regions are maintaining their measles elimination and eradication status. Some of the countries have made measles vaccination as compulsory before entry especially for those who intend to stay longer.

Therefore, those who are travelling into and out of Malaysia are advised to take note of the following:

1. Travelers to endemic areas especially infants should ensure routine vaccination including MMR are up to date. Older children or adults who did not receive the two lifetime doses should be given a dose of measles vaccination before travelling. Travelers are advised to check the travel advisory of the country of destination for more information.
2. Malaysia is in the process of achieving measles elimination by 2018. So, all travelers are advised to get measles vaccination before coming here.

Polio

Poliomyelitis is considered as one of the world's most serious vaccine preventable disease and until the disease being certified as eradicated globally, the risks of acquiring polio infection (for travelers to infected areas) and reinfection of polio-free areas (by travelers from infected areas) remain.

Malaysia has been certified polio free, together with other countries in the World Health Organisation (WHO) Western Pacific Region since 2000.

Globally, the international spread of wild poliovirus from affected countries to previously polio free countries has led the WHO to declare the issue as a Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC) in May 2014. With the declaration, recommendations were made including for travelers to stop further international spread of poliovirus.

Listed below are states currently affected by wild poliovirus (as of May 2015):

States currently exporting wild poliovirus:

- 1. Pakistan**
- 2. Afghanistan**

States infected with wild poliovirus but not currently exporting wild poliovirus:

- 1. Cameroon**

- 2. Equatorial Guinea**
- 3. Nigeria**
- 4. Somalia**
- 5. Iraq**

Before travelling to the above mentioned countries, travelers from Malaysia must ensure they have completed the age-appropriate polio vaccination according to the National Immunisation Programme schedule. Booster dose is required for adults who have previously received completed dose at least four weeks before travelling.

It is also advisable for travelers to carry their written vaccination record before entering the visited countries.

Travelers from the countries currently affected by wild poliovirus should ensure that polio vaccination is received at least four weeks before their departure. In the event of urgent travel, a vaccine dose is administered before departure. A written vaccination record should be carried.