



# SAN BENITO COUNTY

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**PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES**

Healthy People in Healthy Communities

## PRESS RELEASE FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: 25 April 2019

From: Sam Perez, Public Health Information Officer

Subject: **CDPH Urges Californians Traveling Internationally to be Fully Vaccinated against Measles**

San Benito County—The California Department of Public Health (CDPH) today urged Californians to make sure they are protected against measles. Vaccination is especially critical for those who plan to travel internationally. In 2019 to date, there have been 38 cases of measles in California. This is an increase of 15 cases from last week, and compares with 11 cases at this time in 2018. Of the 2019 cases, 14 cases were in international travelers, 22 cases were due to spread from travelers to persons in California, and 2 cases are of unknown source. Measles is currently widespread in many countries.

“Vaccination is the only way to ensure you and your family members will not get measles,” said State Public Health Officer and CDPH Director Dr. Karen Smith. “Many countries are currently experiencing widespread measles activity. Make sure you and your family are fully vaccinated before travelling internationally, and contact your healthcare provider immediately if anyone develops a rash and a fever while you are abroad, or when you return.” The international travel associated with the 2019 California cases include; India, Cambodia, Thailand, Philippines, Vietnam and the Ukraine.

“Overall, California has a relatively high vaccination rate for measles,” said Dr. Smith. “Approximately 95 percent of all children entering kindergarten in California have received the necessary two doses of measles vaccine. The measles vaccination rate for children in San Benito County is consistent with the state at above 95%. “High vaccination rates have helped to stop the spread of measles,” stated Dr. Gail Newel, Health Office for San Benito County. “However, as evidenced by the outbreaks to date, the remaining unvaccinated and under vaccinated Californians are at risk. Vaccination is the best way to stop the spread of this highly contagious and serious virus. The vaccine provides long-lasting protection against measles. Those who have previously been infected with measles are also protected from being infected with measles again.”

Individuals returning from international travel should call their healthcare provider for advice and avoid contact with other people if measles symptoms develop. Measles begins with a fever that lasts for several days, followed by a cough, runny nose, conjunctivitis (red eye) and a rash. The rash typically appears first on the face, along the hairline, and behind the ears and then affects the rest of the body. Infected people are usually contagious from about 4 days before their rash starts to 4 days afterwards. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s recommendations and guidance for measles vaccination can be found here.

California data on measles is updated weekly and can be found at [www.cdph.ca.gov](http://www.cdph.ca.gov). For more information regarding measles, please go to the Centers for Disease Control website at <https://www.cdc.gov/measles/index.html>, the California Department of Public Health website at <https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/Immunization/measles.aspx> or call Public Health Services at (831) 637-5367. Additional information is also on our website at <http://hhsa.cosb.us/>.

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