



News Release

John R. Kasich / Governor
Lance D. Himes / Interim Director

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 5, 2014

Contact: Office of Public Affairs 614.644.8562

Safe Travel, Healthy Summer Assured with Extra Care

Be sure to update vaccinations and add food safety tips to your packing list

COLUMBUS – Summertime travel at home and abroad may put Ohioans at increased risk of exposure to infectious diseases such as measles and mumps. Additionally, warm weather activities bring an elevated chance of contracting certain food and water-borne illnesses such as *E. coli* and *Salmonella*.

The Ohio Department of Health (ODH) reminds Ohioans that there are effective ways to protect yourself and your family from vaccine-preventable disease and food and waterborne illness. These include making sure everyone is up-to-date on their immunizations and following simple sanitation procedures when preparing food and enjoying outdoor recreation.

“Whether you’re planning a summer cookout, a big holiday celebration or a camping trip, make sure your summer plans include checking your immunization status and following other safety tips,” said ODH State Epidemiologist Dr. Mary DiOrio. “Measles and *Salmonella* may not be the first thing you think about when preparing for that long-awaited getaway, but it’s important to follow a few precautions so that everyone can have a good time this summer.”

Ohio is now part of the largest measles outbreak in the U.S. since 1994, with more than 230 confirmed cases reported in six north-central Ohio counties—largely confined to unvaccinated individuals. When fully vaccinated, the mumps-measles-rubella (MMR) vaccine is 97 percent effective. It is important to note that infants less than one year of age that are too young to be vaccinated are at risk of contracting measles. Measles is especially dangerous to them. Parents are encouraged to talk with their healthcare provider before traveling with an infant to an area where measles outbreaks are occurring.

When it comes to foodborne illnesses, remember the four steps of food safety: (1) Wash hands and surfaces often, (2) don't cross-contaminate, (3) cook to the right temperature and (4) refrigerate promptly. If you believe you or someone you know has become ill from eating a certain food, please contact your local health department.

Recreational water illnesses are caused by germs spread by swallowing, breathing in mists or aerosols of, or having contact with contaminated water in swimming pools, hot tubs, water parks, water play areas, interactive fountains, lakes, rivers, or oceans. The most commonly reported water illnesses are diarrheal illnesses, which are caused by germs. Remember to shower with soap before and after you swim and don't swim when you have diarrhea.

ODH and its local public health partners support the vaccine recommendations set forth by the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). These recommendations include vaccination schedules for when individuals (children and adults) should receive their vaccinations.

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