

Polio: Public Health Emergency of International Concern- update

An update on the polio Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC)



The thirteenth meeting of the Emergency Committee (EC) under IHR 2005 [1] was convened on 24 April 2017, to review the data on wild poliovirus (WPV) and circulating vaccine derived polioviruses (cVDPV).

The Committee concluded that:

- the international spread of poliovirus remains a Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC)
- risk stratification of countries would change to strengthen recommendations for some countries reporting WPV and/or cVDPV

As of 24 April 2017, the polio status of countries is outlined below [1].

States infected with WPV1, cVDPV or c VDPV3 with the potential risk of international spread:

- Afghanistan WPV1
- Nigeria (WPV1 and cVDPV2)
- Pakistan (WPV1 and cVDPV2)

Travellers who intend to visit these countries for 4 weeks or more should be aware that proof of vaccination [an [International Certificate of Vaccination or Prophylaxis \(ICVP\)](#)], given 4 weeks to 12 months before departure from the country, may be required on exit. Failure to produce this documentation may result in vaccination at the point of departure, most likely with oral polio vaccine.

States no longer infected by WPV1 or cVDPV, but which remain vulnerable to re-infection by WPV or cVDPV:

- Cameroon
- Central African Republic
- Chad
- Equatorial Guinea
- Guinea
- Lao People's Democratic Republic (Lao PDR)*
- Niger
- Madagascar
- Myanmar
- Ukraine

*since the 13th EC meeting, Lao PDR is no longer considered infected with cVDPV but remains vulnerable to re-infection.

The polio status of countries is reviewed by WHO on a regular basis and polio vaccination recommendations are subject to change.

For polio vaccination recommendation for travellers to these countries [see our Country Information pages](#).

Advice for travellers

[Polio](#) is transmitted via the faecal-oral route, either by exposure to water contaminated by infected human faeces, or by person to person contact. You should practise strict [food, water and personal hygiene](#).

Independent of your destination, you should complete a primary vaccination course for polio according to [the UK schedule](#). Travellers are encouraged to carry documentary evidence of their polio vaccination status.

An International Certificate of Vaccination or Prophylaxis is required by some countries [see our Country Information pages](#) for country specific information.

Advice for health professionals

All travellers regardless of destination should be up to date with routine vaccination courses and boosters as [recommended in the UK](#). See our [Country Information pages](#) for country specific recommendations and certificate requirements.

For specific outbreak information, check our [Outbreak Surveillance](#). The polio status of countries is reviewed by WHO on a regular basis and polio vaccination recommendations are subject to change.

Resources

- [Global Polio Eradication Initiative](#)
- [Poliomyelitis factsheet](#)
- [Public Health England: Polio – guidance, data and analysis](#)
- [World Health Organization: Polio](#)

References

1. [World Health Organization. Statement on the 13th IHR Emergency Committee regarding the international spread of poliovirus](#). [Accessed 9 May 2017]