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Polio: Public Health Emergency of International Concern

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

- **This updates the news item of 17 March 2022**

The thirty-second meeting of the Emergency Committee (EC) under International Health Regulations (IHR) 2005 was convened on 15 June 2022 to review the data on wild polio virus (WPV) and circulating vaccine-derived polioviruses (cVDPV) and progress made towards stopping transmission since the last report (28 February 2022) [1,2].

The statement from the EC, which provides the background to the emergency and detail on the current situation, is available: [Statement of the Thirty-second IHR Emergency Committee Regarding the International Spread of Poliovirus](#).

Countries with a change in status since the last EC meeting: Congo, Cote d'Ivoire, Eritrea, Ghana, Iran, Israel, Mozambique, Palestinian Territories, Tajikistan, Togo and Yemen.

See polio vaccination recommendations and certificate information on the individual [Country Information](#) pages for those who plan to travel to these countries.

Advice for travellers

You should follow the [latest foreign travel advice](#) for travellers from the United Kingdom.

You can become infected with the [polio](#) virus through contact with the infected human faeces and/or respiratory secretions of an infected person. The virus can also be found in food or water contaminated with infected faeces. You should practise strict [food, water and personal hygiene](#).

Wherever you are travelling to, you should make sure you have completed a primary vaccination course for polio according to the [UK schedule](#)*.

If you have missed out for any reason, you can have polio vaccination for free on the NHS at any age.

You should get vaccinated even if you've had polio before as the vaccine protects against different types of polio.

The inactivated polio vaccine (IPV) used in the UK provides protection against types 1, 2 and 3 polioviruses. The bivalent oral polio vaccine (bOPV) used in some other countries, does not protect against type 2 poliovirus. You should check with your doctor or nurse that you are protected against all types of polioviruses.

You are encouraged to carry documentary evidence of your polio vaccinations. An International Certificate of Vaccination or Prophylaxis is required by some countries. See our [Country Information](#) pages for country-specific information.

***Poliovirus detected in sewage in North and East London 2022**

Routine surveillance of sewage in the UK between February and May 2022, detected vaccine derived polio virus type 2 (VDPV2). The viruses detected in samples appear to be closely related and this suggests some spread between closely linked individuals in North and East London. The risk to the public overall is extremely low, but anyone who is not up to date with their polio vaccinations is being encouraged to contact their GP to catch up [3,4].

Advice for health professionals

All travellers regardless of destination should be up to date with routine vaccination schedule [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](#)
- [Global Polio Eradication Initiative. Vaccine-Derived Polioviruses](#)
- [Global Polio Eradication Initiative. Where we work](#)
- [Poliomyelitis factsheet](#)
- [UK Health Security Agency: Polio - guidance, data and analysis](#)
- [World Health Organization: Polio](#)

References

1. [World Health Organization. Statement on the Thirty-second IHR Emergency Committee, 15 June 2022. Published 24 June 2022 \[Accessed 30 June 2022\]](#)
2. [World Health Organization. Statement on the Thirtieth-first IHR Emergency Committee, 28 February 2022. Published 11 March 2022 \[Accessed 30 June 2022\]](#)
3. [UK Health Security Agency. Poliovirus detected in sewage from North and East London. 22 June 2022. \[Accessed 30 June 2022\]](#)
4. [Global Polio Eradication Initiative. Vaccine-derived poliovirus type 2 \(VDPV2\) detected in environmental samples in London, UK. 22 June 2022. \[Accessed 30 June 2022\]](#)