



health

Department of  
Health  
FREE STATE PROVINCE

**EMBARGO: IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**NATIONAL MEASLES AND POLIO MASS CAMPAIGN**  
**SECOND ROUND: 17 TO 28 JUNE 2013**

**The second round of the annual polio and measles campaign will take place from 17 to 28 June 2013.**

Parents and caregivers of children under 5 years are requested to ensure that their children receive an additional dose of polio drops.

Children from 9 months to 59 months (under 5 years) will also receive an additional dose of measles vaccine (only if they were not vaccinated against measles during the first round).

The first round took place from 29 April to 19 May 2013, but large numbers of children in the particular age groups did not turn up for immunisation.

Schools, crèches and day care centers will be visited by Professional Nurses. Parents of these children will be requested to sign consent. Children can also be taken to the nearest clinic for the immunizations.

The vaccines are free and no Road to Health booklets (baby cards) is required. The children's fingers will be marked after they received the vaccines.

END

Issued by Public Relations and Communication; Free State Department of Health:

Enquiries:

Mondli Mvambi

Acting Spokesperson, Free State Department of Health

Tel: (051) 403 3238, cell: 082 0433 744

E-mail Address: [mmvambi@gmail.co.za](mailto:mmvambi@gmail.co.za)

**MEDIA RELEASE**

## **Additional information**

### **Why a Polio and Measles campaign?**

South Africa had more cases of measles in the years 2009 to 2011 than the years before that. Measles can be a serious disease. It can cause blindness, hearing problems, brain damage, pneumonia and even death.

Right now, many children have received one or two doses of measles vaccine during their first two years of life. Those doses work in about 9 out of 10 children. Outbreaks may still occur amongst those that were not immunized or amongst those in whom the vaccine did not work.

There are 3 countries in the world where polio is endemic. They are Nigeria, Pakistan and Afghanistan. Currently South Africa has a polio free status. The World Health Organization set the goal to eradicate Polio globally by 2015.

The polio and measles campaign is one of the national strategies to eradicate these diseases.

### **What is causing measles?**

Measles is a virus and is spread by droplets. If a person is sick with measles and he sneezes, coughs or even kisses a person, the virus can be transmitted to a healthy person. The virus is very infectious. The only way to prevent measles is by immunizations.

### **Why are polio vaccinations important?**

Polio is caused by a virus. It is transmitted via the fecal-oral route. The virus multiplies in the throat and the gut and is excreted again in the stools. The virus affects the nerves and causes paralysis. Polio is a crippling disease and the only way to prevent it is the administration of polio vaccine. Children under 15 years that is not fully immunized is most at risk.

### **Are the vaccines safe?**

Yes, Both measles and polio vaccine have been used in South Africa for more than 19 years. A few people may get a slight fever or rash 7 to 10 days after the measles injection is given.

Serious side effects from the vaccines are very rare – a lot more rare than the serious complications of the disease itself.

Anyone who has had two or more doses of measles can safely have another. So can those who have had measles infection. Side effects are less common in those who already had a dose of this vaccine.

If there any person or group of people, e.g. women at churches or mothers of children at crèches, who would like to assist, please contact the nearest clinic. We are in need of volunteers.

Parents who have concerns regarding measles or polio vaccines are requested to consult their nearest clinic or family practitioner.

***Immunize every child – give polio and measles the final push!***