



2018 Polio Outbreak in Papua New Guinea

There is an outbreak of polio currently occurring in Papua New Guinea (PNG).

What is polio?

Polio is short for poliomyelitis. It is a serious viral disease that can lead to long-term disability, paralysis and death.

How to protect yourself

Vaccination is your best defence against polio.

If you are travelling to PNG, don't run the risk of getting sick – make sure your vaccinations are up-to-date, including having a booster, before you go.

Information for travellers

Travellers to PNG should check their vaccination records and consult their general practitioner (GP) or travel doctor regarding their vaccination requirements. Everyone traveling to PNG should have completed a three dose course of polio vaccine and had a booster dose – the timing depends on how long ago you were vaccinated and how long you are staying.

Information about travelling to PNG is available at

- the Australian Government Department of Health website: www.health.gov.au/polio-outbreak
- the Australian Government Smartraveller website: smartraveller.gov.au

What is the risk to Australia?

Polio is very unlikely to spread in Australia because of high rates of vaccine coverage, good sanitation, and the ability of the health system to respond to cases.

About the outbreak

On 22 June 2018, the PNG Government notified the World Health Organization (WHO) of an outbreak of circulating vaccine-derived poliovirus.

The PNG Government is working with partners, including WHO and UNICEF, to take appropriate outbreak response measures including contact tracing, testing and vaccination.

More information

For more information check the Australian Government website: www.health.gov.au/polio-outbreak

More information about the situation in PNG, including case numbers and response actions, can be found on the WHO and Global Polio Eradication Initiative websites.

