

Celebrate National Public Health Week By Making Sure You've Had Your Measles Vaccination Updated

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The first week of April National Public Health Week. It is a time to raise awareness about the value and contributions of public health. It also is a good time to raise awareness of the need for Clatsop County residents to make sure their measles vaccines are current.

"The measles virus is just a jet flight away from the United States," said Clatsop County Public Health Director Jiancheng Huang. From January 1 to March 14, 2024, the CDC was notified of 58 confirmed U.S. cases of measles across 17 states.

Due to the COVID pandemic, measles and other recommended vaccines were missed or postponed, and now more than a dozen countries have measles outbreaks, with cases ranging from several thousand to more than 20,000.

In Clatsop County, early childhood immunization including measles containing vaccination coverages are lower than the state averages. In 2022, 87.1% of children statewide received the MMR vaccine, which protects against measles and other illnesses. In Clatsop County, that number is was 84.3%.

"For all vaccines, we need to get to herd immunity to protect those who are not or cannot be vaccinated. That means we need to have a measles vaccine rate of at least 95%," Huang said.

This year the American Public Health Association chose the theme Public Health Week theme "We Are All Public Health." It spotlights the connections between individuals, institutions, healthcare, mental health, social services, and public health in the community.

The theme is a reminder that the most effective way to address community health needs and build healthier communities is through collective responsibility and actions in promoting health and wellness for everyone.

Clatsop County is a collaboration-spirited community. During the COVID pandemic, volunteers, hospitals, community-based organizations, and government agencies worked together to mitigate the impacts of the pandemic on the community.

"The Rural Health Coalition of Clatsop County was officially formed earlier this year to consolidate and strengthen collaborations formed during the COVID pandemic. We look forward to the coalition being the vehicle that drives community collaboration in health improvement for

all. We have a lot to collaborate on,” Huang said.

Traditionally, the immunization program is part of public health. Public health must engage schools, early childhood education providers, and healthcare providers to ensure students are current with the MMR vaccine.

Other health concerns in Clatsop County include high cancer deaths from tobacco use. Alcohol kills more people than substance use overdose. Long-term planned collaborations can help solve these public health challenges.

Huang recommends celebrating Public Health Week by viewing video clips and short readings:

- Day 1: [What is Public Health video](#)
- Day 2: [Public Health and Increasing Life Expectancy video](#)
- Day 3: [What is Environmental Health video](#)
- Day 4: [Smokefree Oregon Peter Pan Market video](#)
- Day 5: [What is Public Health – Spanish language video](#)
- Day 6: [Growing Health Futures with WIC video](#)
- Day 7: [Public Health 101 article](#)

“I encourage individuals to reach out to me if to share some thoughts about public health and how we can improve our Community’s health. You can send your comments and suggestions to [health \[at\] clatsopcounty.gov](mailto:health@clatsopcounty.gov) (),” Huang said.