

Menu



Search

About DOH News Employment Notices and Recent Orders

Select ▼

- Statements
- Recent Press Releases
- Español (Spanish)
- 繁體中文 (Chinese)
- Press Releases Archive

NYSDOH and NYCDOHMH Wastewater Monitoring Identifies Polio in New York City and Urge Unvaccinated New Yorkers to Get Vaccinated Now

Sewage samples in New York City provided to the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention identified presence of polioviruses indicating a risk of community transmission

Polio can lead to paralysis and even death

Learn more about polio and immunization: health.ny.gov/polio or at nyc.gov/health/polio

August 12, 2022 — The New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH) and the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (NYCDOHMH) today updated New Yorkers on the detection of poliovirus (the virus that causes paralytic polio) in sewage, suggesting likely local circulation of the virus. Polio can lead to permanent paralysis of the arms and legs and even death in some cases.

“For every one case of paralytic polio identified, hundreds more may be undetected,” **State Health Commissioner Dr. Mary T. Bassett** said. “The detection of poliovirus in wastewater samples in New York City is alarming, but not surprising. Already, the State Health Department – working with local and federal partners – is responding urgently, continuing case investigation and aggressively assessing spread. The best way to keep adults and children polio-free is through safe and effective immunization – New Yorkers’ greatest protection against the worst outcomes of polio, including permanent paralysis and even death.”

“The risk to New Yorkers is real but the defense is so simple – get vaccinated against polio,” said **Health Commissioner Dr. Ashwin Vasan**. “With polio circulating in our communities there is simply nothing more essential than vaccinating our children to protect them from this virus, and if you’re an unvaccinated or incompletely vaccinated adult, please choose now to get the vaccine. Polio is entirely preventable and its reappearance should be a call to action for all of us.”

These findings follow the identification of a case of paralytic polio among a Rockland County resident on July 21, and the detection of poliovirus in wastewater samples collected in May, June and July from neighboring New York City counties, Rockland and Orange County – underscoring the urgency of every adult, including pregnant New Yorkers, and children staying up to date with