

## Avoiding Preventable Illness is Key to the Health of Canadians

*National Immunization Awareness Week is 21-28 April 2018*

**20 April 2018, OTTAWA, ON** — During National Immunization Awareness Week (NIAW), Immunize Canada wants all Canadians to ensure their defense against diseases is at full strength. NIAW, 21-28 April, is an annual event held to recognize the importance of immunization to our overall population health and prevention of diseases.

“Immunization is the strongest defense against preventable diseases,” said Immunize Canada Chair Dr. Shelly McNeil. “Vaccines are the most cost-effective and broad-reaching public health measure we have to stop the spread of diseases and keep all Canadians healthy. One of the best things we can do for our country’s health is boost immunization rates.”

Vaccine programs are highly effective in controlling and nearly eliminating dangerous diseases that can cause serious complications or death. However, outbreaks —heightened by increased global mobility — threaten their widespread success. In early 2018, two cases of measles were confirmed on Air Canada flights from Zurich, Switzerland.

“Children, seniors, pregnant women and others with compromised immune systems are most at risk of serious illness from the spread of disease,” said Dr. Nicole Le Saux, Immunize Canada Vice-Chair. “Immunization is a safe and effective way of protecting them from illness, but everyone in between must be up to date on their immunizations too. It may be difficult to wade through the immense volume of news and data about vaccines, but a registered health provider is the best source of information. Every time you go to your health provider, you should be asking if your immunizations are up to date, and which vaccines you need to stay healthy.”

Immunize Canada has published a number of campaign materials — credible research, posters, social content and more — at [immunize.ca](http://immunize.ca) to help share important messages about immunization during NIAW.

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**Immunize Canada** is a national coalition of non-governmental, professional, health, government and private sector organizations with a specific interest in promoting the understanding and use of vaccines as recommended by the National Advisory Committee on Immunization (NACI).

### Links:

Immunize Canada	<a href="http://immunize.ca">immunize.ca</a>	<a href="https://twitter.com/ImmunizedotCa">@ImmunizedotCa</a>
Canadian Public Health Association	<a href="http://cpha.ca">cpha.ca</a>	<a href="https://twitter.com/CPHA_ACSP">@CPHA_ACSP</a>
Public Health Agency of Canada	<a href="http://canada.ca/en/public-health.html">canada.ca/en/public-health.html</a>	<a href="https://twitter.com/GovCanHealth">@GovCanHealth</a>

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