



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

**News Release**

**LINDA LINGLE**  
GOVERNOR

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**DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH OBSERVES  
NATIONAL INFANT IMMUNIZATION WEEK  
APRIL 25 – MAY 2, 2009**

HONOLULU – The Hawai'i State Department of Health (DOH) joins healthcare providers, social service agencies, and other health departments across the nation in highlighting the importance of immunizations during National Infant Immunization Week April 25 - May 2, 2009.

One of the best ways to protect infants and young children is to make sure they receive all of the recommended immunizations by age 2 years. Many of Hawai'i's keiki remain unprotected from diseases like measles, mumps, influenza, and pertussis (also known as whooping cough). These diseases can be far more serious or even deadly among babies and young children.

Over the past few years, there has been an increase in pertussis cases across the nation. In Hawai'i, 20 cases of pertussis were reported to the DOH in 2008. Every child needs four doses of a vaccine called DTaP by age two years to be protected from pertussis.

According to the most recent results of the National Immunization Survey, approximately one in every five children in Hawai'i age 19-35 months has not received the fourth dose of DTaP vaccine. "Although it may be difficult at times for families to take their children to the doctor or clinic for immunizations, the fourth dose of DTaP vaccine is critical to protect against this serious and sometimes deadly disease," said Health Director Dr. Chiyome Fukino.

**(more)**

The DOH urges parents and healthcare providers to ensure that all of Hawai'i's keiki are immunized on time, every time. For more information about infant immunizations:

- Talk to your baby's healthcare provider;
- Call the Department of Health, Immunization Branch  
Oahu: 586-8332  
Neighbor Islands: 1-800-933-4832; or
- Visit [www.vaxhawaii.com](http://www.vaxhawaii.com).

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