



WASHINGTON STATE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

# Provider Alert

## Provider Alert: Be alert for severe adverse events in older adults after chikungunya vaccination

Date: February 27, 2025

**This is a Provider Alert from the Washington State Department of Health (WA DOH) regarding the potential for serious adverse events in older adults (65+ years) after receiving chikungunya vaccine.**

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is investigating a small number of adverse events, including cardiac and neurologic events, in older adults after receiving the Chikungunya vaccine (IXCHIQ). The CDC Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System (VAERS) has received 5 reports of hospitalizations after administration of chikungunya vaccine. All patients were 65 years or older, and many patients had significant underlying medical conditions.

While there are no known cases of severe reactions in Washington residents, WA DOH wants to ensure that providers are aware of these potential serious adverse events, especially in older adults.

### Actions Requested:

- Be alert for severe adverse events after vaccination for chikungunya, especially in older adults.
- Report any adverse event following chikungunya vaccination – or any other vaccination - to [VAERS](#).
- Discuss the [risks and benefits](#) of chikungunya vaccination for travelers with your patients based on each traveler's age, destination, trip duration, and planned activities.
- Review the latest [CDC Travel Health Notices](#) and be aware of [countries and territories](#) with outbreaks or evidence of chikungunya virus transmission among people within the last 5 years.
- Refer to the warning in the IXCHIQ vaccine [package insert](#) for additional safety information, including potential chikungunya-like adverse reactions.

### Background

Chikungunya is a viral disease primarily spread to people through the bite of infected mosquitos. The most common symptoms of chikungunya are fever and joint pain. Other symptoms can include headache, muscle pain, joint swelling, or rash. There is no specific treatment for Chikungunya.

Outbreaks of Chikungunya have occurred in Africa, the Americas, Asia, Europe, and islands in the

Indian and Pacific Oceans. While there are no current outbreaks of Chikungunya in the United States, and no locally-acquired cases in Washington, there is a risk the virus can spread to unaffected areas by infected travelers if the mosquitoes that carry Chikungunya are present in those locations.

The Chikungunya vaccine was approved by FDA in November 2023 and recommended by the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) in February 2024. It is a live-attenuated vaccine that is given as a single dose. It is recommended for adults 18 years and older who are travelling to areas with risk for chikungunya, as well as for lab workers who might be exposed to chikungunya virus.

VAERS is an early warning system for potential vaccine safety issues; CDC is reviewing available information to investigate these cases further. Findings from the investigations will be reviewed at a future [ACIP meeting](#). More information will be released as it becomes available.

**Resources:**

- [CDC: Signs and Symptoms of Chikungunya Virus Disease](#)
- [CDC: Preventing Chikungunya](#)
- [CDC: Chikungunya Vaccine Information for Healthcare Providers](#)
- [FDA: Chikungunya Vaccine Information Page](#)

**Contact:**

To report suspected cases of Chikungunya, please contact the WA DOH Zoonotic Disease Program at [zd@doh.wa.gov](mailto:zd@doh.wa.gov).

For any questions related to immunizations, please contact the WA DOH Office of Immunization at [immunenurses@doh.wa.gov](mailto:immunenurses@doh.wa.gov).