



Explore Rotary's role in the 2,000-year history of vaccination

From 430 B.C. to the present day, people's growing understanding of vaccination has changed the world. Today, vaccines protect against diseases such as diphtheria, cholera, tuberculosis, measles, polio, and more. Smallpox was declared eradicated in 1980. And in 1985, Rotary members who were inspired to add a second disease to the list of those eradicated launched the PolioPlus program to stop the spread of polio through strategic global immunization efforts. Thanks to the commitment of Rotary and our partners in the Global Polio Eradication Initiative, wild poliovirus cases worldwide have been reduced by 99.9% since 1988, with only two countries still reporting cases — Afghanistan and Pakistan. This year, Rotary clubs and districts are leveraging their experience fighting polio and mobilizing volunteers to support COVID-19 vaccination efforts, while continuing to ensure that children around the world are vaccinated against polio. [Read more about the history of vaccinations, including the polio vaccine.](#)

World Immunization Week is happening now!

With World Immunization Week being celebrated 24-30 April, now is the time to remind people that #VaccinesWork. **Use Rotary's toolkit** with graphics and social media posts to raise awareness of the power that vaccines have to save lives, as shown by our progress eradicating wild poliovirus in all but two countries.

Introduce your community to a new video resource — “Rotary Inspires Leaders in Global Health” — in which global health experts discuss Rotary's achievements and leadership in the fight to end polio.

Download and **share** the video to promote our polio eradication efforts and the importance of staying committed until all children are safe from the disease.

**Download resources
to share**



Rotary International president discusses global polio situation

In a special interview with the Global Polio Eradication Initiative's PolioNews, Rotary International President Holger Knaack provides an overview of our global polio eradication efforts and the lessons that we've learned in the past year as Rotary has responded to the COVID-19 pandemic. Knaack says that strengthening health systems and advancing scientific knowledge are important factors in fighting disease. Rotary members have learned this through decades of work toward eradicating polio and are now using that knowledge to address the COVID-19 crisis. Knaack emphasizes that we are at a critical point in our goal to rid the world of polio — and it's time to fight harder than ever.



Read the full story

Rotary in the news

Carol Pandak, director of Rotary's PolioPlus program, answers questions from the global development site Devex about **how members are using their experience with polio eradication** to support local vaccination efforts and educate communities about the importance of vaccines.

India PolioPlus Committee Chair Deepak Kapur addresses the topic of vaccine hesitancy in a column for Outlook magazine. He **outlines strategies to increase public acceptance** of COVID-19 vaccination programs by correcting misinformation and countering misconceptions. For this, Kapur draws on the success of nationwide immunization campaigns that helped India become polio-free seven years ago.

Help end polio

Please consider making a contribution to Rotary's PolioPlus fund, and have your donation matched 2-to-1 by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. Your donation helps us reach vulnerable children with the polio vaccine and other essential health services.

[Donate](#)

© Rotary International

One Rotary Center, 1560 Sherman Ave., Evanston, IL 60201-3698, USA