

# MEASLES RISE ALARMS DOH

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The Department of Health (DOH) is urging parents to have their children vaccinated against measles following what health authorities said was an alarming surge (3,671 per cent) in the number of measles cases in the National Capital Region (NCR) and Mindanao.



On Monday, health officials launched in Parañaque City a monthlong campaign, National Ligtas Tigdas Supplemental Immunization Activity, following the spike in transmission of measles among children and pregnant women.

Citing data from the DOH Epidemiology Bureau, Health Secretary Francisco Duque III said 5,450 measles cases had been reported from January to April this year, with 905 of these confirmed.

15 fatal cases

This was 3,671 percent higher compared to the figure last year, which was only 24 confirmed cases.

Of the 905 confirmed cases this year, 15 were fatal.

At least 86 percent of children who died of measles were unvaccinated.

“These were unfortunate deaths,” Duque said.

“They would not have died because measles can be prevented,” he added.

Duque asked parents to go to local health centers to get their children vaccinated.

The vaccination campaign was set for April 24 to May 24 in NCR and May 9 to June 8 in six regions in Mindanao.

Duque appealed to the public to trust the antimeasles vaccine because it was safe and “we have been doing this since the 1970s.”

‘Except Dengvaxia’

He said all vaccines being used for the DOH immunization program “were proven quality and effective except Dengvaxia,” referring to the antidengue vaccine that became controversial after it was used on 800,000 children without tests.