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Media alert from the Media Scanning & Verification Cell, IDSP-NCDC.

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4086	05.06.2017	05.06.2017	Wayanad Kerala	www.deccanchronicle.com/English http://www.deccanchronicle.com/lifestyle/health-and-wellbeing/050617/diphtheria-haunts-wayanad.html
Title:	Diphtheria haunts Wayanad district, Kerala			
Action By CSU, IDSP -NCDC	Information communicated to DSU-Wayanad, SSU-Kerala			

Diphtheria has appeared in Wayanad and as many as six cases had been confirmed so far. Two other persons are suspected to have it as the disease has affected adults as well as children. The latest was believed to be a 30-year old woman in Meenangady. A 11-year old child in Mullankolli gram panchayat, woman in Poothady, 15-year old girl in Mananthawady, 9-year old boy in Cheeral and Vellamunda native woman are the other reported cases. According to the District Medical Officer (DMO), Dr Vivek Kumar. R, the children who were afflicted with diphtheria were immunized.

"As diphtheria was reported from various places we had begun a fever survey under all primary health centers in the district. The health squad will visit each household to give a complete check-up," he told DC. Erythromycin tablets are being distributed in the reported areas. Vaccination had been given to all primary contacts and to the students in the schools of the area. Besides, an awareness campaign had been started calling for the need for vaccination. The Health department has decided to make effective use of street plays in the bordering villages. Also, village centric campaigns will be strengthened through Anganwadis. Authorities also are wary of the considerable sway of naturopaths, who are against immunization, in some pockets.

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**Integrated Disease Surveillance Programme (IDSP), National Centre for Disease Control,
Ministry Of Health & Family Welfare, Government of India**

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Infection hits adults more in Malappuram

The number of persons infected with the deadly diphtheria in Malappuram district has risen to eight this year so far. Half of the cases were confirmed during the past month alone. Besides, as many as 35 persons have been traced with symptoms of the vaccine preventable disease at various health blocks in the district. According to the district health department, the diphtheria infection has shifted to the higher age groups compared to children. "There is evidently an age shift in number of diphtheria cases in the district. Most of the infected and suspected cases were aged above 10 years," District Medical Officer (DMO) Dr. K Sakeena said. Though the number infections among the children have reduced in the district, the rise of the infection among 10-40 age groups is a concern, she said.

The health department is planning special immunity awareness drive for a sustainable change in the district where the anti vaccination sentiment remains strong despite several kinds of health campaigns. Dr. Sakeena said that special awareness campaign will be launched soon in all the schools in the district with help of Department of Education. A class by a pediatrician will also be conducted in all the schools in the district with the help of IMA and IAP, she said. The health department has also plans to counter the whisper campaign against vaccination through social media. The authorities have succeeded in vaccinating 1.03 lakh children aged 7-15 during the ongoing drive which launched last year. However the district has 6,932 children unimmunised in this age group besides partially immunised 74,894 others. The immunization drive had covered 90 per cent of the children aged 0-5 last year.

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