

Cuba protects its children



Polio vaccination in Cuba

By Maria Josefina Arce

This week began in Cuba a new vaccination campaign against poliomyelitis, a highly infectious disease, which causes paralysis, can cause death, and that before the triumph of the Revolution was an endemic disease in the Cuban territory.

The first stage will conclude this Saturday and next week is a recovery period for children who, for one reason or another, did not receive the dose. The second stage begins in April, with recovery in May.

According to specialists, our country suffered five major epidemics of this disease in the 20th century, the last one in 1955. However, forty years later, it received the Certification of Eradication of Poliomyelitis by PAHO, Pan American Health Organization.

Cuba thus became the first country in the Americas to achieve the elimination of this disease, thanks to the efforts made and the political will of the state to protect its children and ensure that polio ceased to be a health problem.

As early as 1962, the revolutionary government launched the first vaccination campaign in the national territory, a feat in which the people played a decisive role.

An article in the Granma newspaper recalls that the Committees for the Defense of the Revolution, created two years earlier, were responsible for the census of the population to be vaccinated, which at that time consisted of children from one month old to 14 years of age.

It was also vital the support of another organization born after the revolutionary triumph, the Federation of Cuban Women, which was fully committed to informing mothers and the population in general about the importance of vaccinating their children with the vaccine.

That historic campaign was the beginning. Every year the Cuban territory is the scene of the immunization of our children, which has never stopped, not even in the most complex economic conditions.

And although the genocidal blockade, imposed for more than 60 years by the United States, entails severe limitations, the efforts of the authorities and the health personnel have made it possible to continue protecting our population.

Even during the COVID 19 pandemic, the anti-polio immunogen was applied in the country, observing the necessary measures to prevent the infection of infants, their mothers and health personnel.

Precisely the WHO, World Health Organization, called during the world sanitary emergency not to neglect the vaccination against Poliomyelitis, since an immunization coverage lower than 95% can bring back with force this disabling and deadly disease.

This new National Polio Vaccination Campaign, the sixty-second to be carried out in Cuba, is another example of the political will of the state to preserve the health of Cubans.

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