

GENERAL TRAVEL ADVICE

1. Be aware of potential problems. Watch news. Check out website of Centers for Disease Control at www.cdc.gov. For most current travel information: (800) 232-4636
2. State Department (202) 647-5226 ask for information on updates on current political and crime situations in various areas.
3. Determine if antimalarials and / or immunizations are recommended. Your Travax Report will contain this information.
4. Obtain address and phone number of American Embassy / Consulate in each country / area that you plan to visit (may be obtained from Travax Report).
5. Develop a plan for illness including specific information about health facilities in each place on your itinerary.
 - a. This information may be obtained from the American Embassy or consulate or your travel agency.
 - b. Find out whether or not your current health insurance covers illness abroad. You may wish / need to buy special health insurance.
6. If you take any medication (prescription or OTC) on a regular basis, or if there are any medications that you take intermittently but are essential, bring an ample supply. Keep each medication in its original container and carry it with you instead of in a checked bag.
 - a. When possible, carry a note from your physician stating that these medications are required. Each medication (brand and generic) dose and schedule should be recorded in the physician's statement.
 - b. If you have a chronic or potentially life-threatening medical illness, confirmation that your plans are compatible with your health should be obtained from your primary physician.
 - c. Carry a card or wear an ID bracelet for medical conditions or allergies. Make your travelling companions aware of these.
 - d. Do not treat yourself with *local* over-the-counter (OTC) or prescription medications as some of them are unsafe. Bring your OTC and prescription medications with you.
7. Take an extra pair of glasses or contact lenses as well as a copy of your eyeglass prescription. Also carry contact lens solution, sunglasses, and eyeglass repair kit.
8. Carry in an easily accessible place (such as with your passport):
 - a. Your identification – Passport
 - b. Your physician's name, address, phone number and fax number
 - c. Immunization records and/or your yellow "International Certificate of Vaccination."
 - d. Your Blood Type – *Essential* when visiting Asian Countries – Rh negative blood is in short supply
9. Carry moist towelettes / alcohol based hand-sanitizer to clean your hands, fruit, cups, dishes, etc. when safe water is not available.
10. Heat/Sun Exposure:
 - a. Wear protective clothing. Cotton clothing absorbs perspiration and promotes evaporation, leading to a cooling effect.
 - b. Drink lots of fluids and avoid alcohol.
 - c. Use sunblock and lip balms with sunblock.
11. Cold Exposure: Bring adequate clothing and layer clothing.

12. The following is a list of items you may want to consider taking with you either individually or as a group. Carry with you (check in baggage) a first aid / travel kit which includes the following:

<http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/yellowbook/2012/chapter-2-the-pre-travel-consultation/travel-health-kits.htm>

Ace bandage	Antifungal cream or powder
Pencil and paper	Hydrocortisone cream
Tweezers	Anti-itch cream
Eye dropper	Insect repellants with DEET
Medications used regularly with physician's statement	Sun block
Water purification tablets	Motion sickness pills
Anti-diarrheal medicine (e.g. Pepto-Bismol, Imodium)	Ana-kit or Epipen (Severe allergic reactions)
Isopropyl (Rubbing) Alcohol	Decongestant
Sterile needles or syringes	Constipation medication
Pocket knife	Thermometer
Scissors	Diaphragm or condoms
Flashlight and batteries	Povidone iodine solution for skin disinfection
Antacids	Personal hygiene supplies
Band-aids	Pain / Fever medication (aspirin, acetaminophen, ibuprofen)
Sterile gauze	Baking soda
Adhesive tape	Mosquito netting
Antibiotic ointment	Oral rehydration packets

13. Some diseases are transmitted by contact with the skin:

- Do not swim, bathe, or wade in fresh water streams, lakes, or canals, or rivers. If contact occurs, immediately towel dry and apply rubbing alcohol (isopropyl) to those areas.
- If swimming in salt water or seas, make certain that there is no source of human or animal waste into that area.
- It is best to swim in well-kept, chlorinated pools.
- Do not walk barefoot.
- Do not break in new shoes or boots as blisters are not only painful but are a potential source of infection in tropical countries.

14. Animal Bites –

- In most parts of the world, some animals are potential sources of rabies.
- Avoid contact with domestic and wild animals.
- If bitten or scratched by an animal, follow these guidelines:
 - Try to identify the biting animal.
 - Immediately wash the wound copiously with soap and running water.
 - Do not delay in seeking medical attention (local, American Embassy or Consulate).

15. Shake out clothing and shoes before dressing in snake or scorpion infested areas.

16. Motor vehicle accidents are a real threat to travelers.

- Avoid vehicles / traveling situations that seem unsafe.
- Drive slowly and learn how to say "Please drive slowly" in the local language.
- Be cautious-paying close attention while riding and walking.

17. Do not buy goatskin handicrafts from Haiti or other parts of the Caribbean. All such items will be confiscated and destroyed by U.S. Customs to avoid the risk of spreading anthrax. These spores may remain alive for years.

18. To avoid the risk of acquiring a sexually transmitted disease, travelers should have sexual contact with only those persons with whom they have sexual contact at home. Sexually transmitted diseases include, among others, HIV, Hepatitis B, and gonorrhea resistant to most antibiotics. HIV and Hepatitis B can also be contracted by sharing needles, by HIV-infected sharp objects including equipment used in ear piercing, tattooing, and medical/dental procedures and by exposure to blood. If you choose to have sexual contact, always use a latex condom (brought from the USA). And avoid anal intercourse. Many developing countries (including many eastern European countries), do not screen donated blood for HIV and sterile needles are not available. Avoid blood products and needles except in life-threatening situations.
19. Take only as much luggage as you personally could carry for 6 blocks. Many places do not have porters or luggage carts.
20. Show respect for other cultures.
 - a. Do not wear inappropriate attire. There are cultures in which women do not wear pants, shorts, swimsuits, sleeveless blouses or dresses, etc.
 - b. Some cultures do not look directly into the eyes of the people they are passing on the street.
 - c. Some cultures use one hand to support the opposite arm as they shake hands as a sign of respect.
 - d. Seek information on the culture you will be visiting.
21. Avoid Jet Lag-Drink plenty of water.
 - a. Air travel promotes dehydration and dehydration increases side effects of jet lag.
 - b. Avoid caffeine and alcohol as both promote dehydration.
 - c. Dramamine may be taken for motion sickness and it can help with sleep as well.
 - d. When you arrive at your destination, try to stay awake if it is during daylight hours and try to sleep if you arrive at night.
22. If you are prone to sinus problems or ear problems, it is a good idea to take a decongestant before flying.
23. Animal Bites –
 - a. In most parts of the world, some animals are potential sources of rabies.
 - b. Avoid contact with domestic and wild animals.
 - c. If bitten or scratched by an animal, follow these guidelines:
 - i. Try to identify the biting animal.
 - ii. Immediately wash the wound copiously with soap and running water.
 - iii. Do not delay in seeking medical attention (local, American Embassy or Consulate).
24. Snakes, Scorpions and other varminths
 - a. Shake out clothing and shoes before dressing in snake or scorpion infested areas.
 - b. Look into drawers or bags prior to reaching in to get clothing or other stored items
25. Traveler's Thrombosis
 - a. Deep vein thrombosis (blood clots in the leg veins) can occur during or after long flights on aircraft
 - b. Take the following Precautions
 - i. When practical and safe, walk around in the aircraft cabin at least every hour. This is easiest if you book an aisle seat
 - ii. Avoid crossing your legs since this may decrease blood circulation to your legs
 - iii. Drink plenty of water to prevent dehydration
 - iv. Unless you have an allergy or medical condition that does not allow it, take two Motrin (Ibuprophen) or Aleve (Naproxen) or take one Aspirin the day before and the day of your travel. This helps by making it more difficult for blood clots to form in your body.

PROTECTION FROM MALARIA AND OTHER VECTOR-BORNE DISEASES

Mosquitoes carrying malaria bite mainly from dusk to dawn, whereas mosquitoes, ticks, flies, and other insects carrying other diseases bite during the day.

1. Take antimalarial medication (if indicated) as directed by physician
2. On arrival at your destination, obtain local information on helpful protective measures
3. Adhere to the following guidelines:
 - a. Use screens in dwellings and netting over beds
 - b. Spray living/sleeping rooms with Permethrin-containing insect spray, especially during evening and nighttime hours
 - c. Sleep in air-conditioned quarters when possible
 - d. Wear long-sleeved shirts and long pants and protection around ankles – all clothing (exterior surface) should be sprayed with Permethrin-containing (Permanone) insecticide
 - e. Clothing should be neutral in color
 - f. Strong perfumes / colognes / after shaves should be avoided
 - g. Insect repellent containing DEET (“Off! Deep Woods Sportsman” or Cutters) should be used on exposed skin during outdoor activity only
 - 1) Use DEET concentration of less than 30%
 - 2) The insect repellent can be removed from the skin by sweat, rain, swimming, showering; or wiping so it must be reapplied to maintain effectiveness
 - 3) Conversely, too much repellent in too high a concentration can have, by absorption through the skin, toxic side effects. To avoid these, the following precautions should be taken:
 - i. Use in concentrations of 30% or less to apply to skin
 - ii. Apply repellent sparingly and only to exposed areas
 - iii. Do not inhale or ingest repellents or get them into eyes
 - iv. Avoid applying repellents to portions of children's hands that are likely to contact mouth or eyes
 - v. Reapply no more frequently than every 4 hours
 - vi. Never use repellents on wounds or irritated skin
 - vii. Wash repellent-treated skin after coming indoors
 - viii. If a suspected reaction of skin occurs (redness, burning, itching, blistering) wash it off immediately and seek medical attention
 - h. Avoid still water ponds and lagoons
 - i. Leave rural areas before dusk if possible
 - j. Do not take long walks in the evening
 - k. Before going to sleep, clear the room of resting mosquitoes with Permethrin-containing insecticide