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Traveler Information

FOOD AND BEVERAGE PRECAUTIONS

INTRODUCTION

It is difficult to guarantee the safety of food and beverages when traveling, especially in developing countries. Without strict public health standards, bacteria, viruses, or parasites in food or water may go undetected and cause illness such as hepatitis A, traveler's diarrhea, typhoid fever, cholera, or polio. To minimize the risk of food- and beverage-related illnesses, travelers should follow the guidelines below when traveling through areas with less than adequate sanitation or water sources of unknown purity.

FOOD PRECAUTIONS

Wash hands thoroughly with soap and water before eating and after using the toilet. If water is not available, use disposable antiseptic wipes.

Avoid street vendors and market stalls and eat at establishments catering to foreigners or known by other travelers to be safe.

Eat well-cooked food served fresh and hot. Avoid raw or undercooked food, unpasteurized dairy products, unpeeled fruit, mayonnaise, and salads. Avoid buffets without food covers and fly controls. Avoid high-risk seafood; see *Seafood Poisoning*.

For nursing infants, breastfeeding is the safest option.

BEVERAGE PRECAUTIONS

Avoid tap water and drinks/ice cubes made from tap water unless advised of their safety by a reliable source. Avoid drinking from wet cans or bottles; dry before opening and clean all surfaces that will have contact with the mouth.

Use sealed bottled water or treated water for drinking and brushing teeth. (See *Treating Water*.) Canned, boxed, or commercially bottled and sealed carbonated water and drinks are generally safe, particularly international brands. Fruit juice should be poured directly from a sealed container.

For non-nursing infants, prepare baby formula with boiled water and use sterilized containers.

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