

ZIKA

Another viral disease causing flu like symptoms. It is spread by daytime biting mosquitoes. Transmission occurs in some Pacific Islands, Central America, South America, Mexico and some African countries (Jan 2016). It is expected to spread widely. Use daytime mosquito precautions. Zika can be sexually transmitted. Women who have been in Zika areas should wait 2 months before becoming pregnant and men who have been in Zika areas should wait 6 months before having unprotected sex or trying to conceive.

LEISHMANIASIS

Leishmaniasis is a parasitic disease transmitted by the bite of an infected sandfly. The disease can range from sores that heal to facial disfigurement to a progressive febrile illness that may end in death. Leishmaniasis occurs in 88 countries on 4 continents, from southern Texas to northern Argentina, north and east Africa, Mediterranean, Middle East, Indian subcontinent and northeast China. Sandflies are noiseless flies, 2-3 mm in length. People who camp out at night or live in unscreened shelters in the forest are at greatest risk. There is no vaccine or medication to prevent leishmaniasis. Transmission is usually at night but may also be in the daytime. Screens, impregnated bed nets and insect protective measures (long sleeves, trousers and insect repellents) should be used when travelling through or working in endemic areas. Travellers should report any skin lesions that appear to heal too slowly to a physician.

**AMERICAN TRYPANOSOMIASIS
(CHAGA’S DISEASE)**

This parasitic disease occurs in Mexico, Central and South America. The parasite is transmitted by insects commonly called kissing bugs. These bugs like to live in thatch, mud or adobe huts. The risk to travellers staying in conventional, urban-type hotels and resorts is very low. Chagas’ disease may also be transmitted by blood transfusion. In certain areas of South America up to 53% of blood donors may be infected. There is no vaccine or medication to prevent Chagas’ disease. Avoid staying overnight in houses constructed of mud, adobe brick or palm thatch. Use bed nets when camping or sleeping outdoors. Avoid blood transfusions unless a life threatening emergency exists. Avoid fresh fruit and cane juices from unsanitary sources (the insects or their feces which contain the parasite may be inadvertently crushed and mixed with freshly prepared sugar cane or fruit juice and cause disease).

**AFRICAN TRYPANOSOMIASIS
(SLEEPING SICKNESS)**

This is a parasite transmitted by the bite of an infected tsetse fly. The disease is prevalent in west, east and southeastern Africa with recent epidemics in Sudan, Democratic Republic of the Congo and Angola. The disease presents as a severe, acute illness that progresses rapidly or a low-grade illness with fever that comes and goes. Both types may result in death if not treated. The risk to travellers is low and can be reduced by avoiding heavily infested tsetse fly areas. Most popular tourist game parks have tsetse fly traps to control the disease. Tsetse

flies are attracted to bright (especially blue) and dark coloured clothing so travellers should wear light coloured clothing. Tsetse flies can bite through light weight clothing so take a heavy jacket to put on if you go through areas where the flies are biting. DEET is minimally protective against tsetse flies but freshly applied DEET may repel them.

CUTANEOUS LARVA MIGRANS

Cutaneous larva migrans (CLM) is caused by a hookworm found in infected dogs and cats. The worm enters the body when the infected larva penetrate the skin when walking barefoot, lying on warm moist soil or sand where infected dogs have deposited feces. Once in the body the larva migrate under the skin where they can cause intensely itchy lesions. Travellers should wear sandals on the beach and shoes when traveling inland and lie on a lounge chair or an air mattress when sunbathing.

ALTITUDE SICKNESS

You may get altitude sickness after quickly going up to altitudes of more than 2,500 meters. If you smoke, drink alcohol, use narcotics or over exercise you will feel much sicker. You may get a headache, feel nausea, dizziness, tiredness, lose your appetite and have problems sleeping. Most of these symptoms will go away on their own. Sometimes oxygen and returning to lower altitudes are all you can do to relieve the symptoms. Travellers going to very high altitudes should discuss preventative medication (acetazolamide) with the Travel Clinic doctor. Coca tea will be offered in Peru and Bolivia as a way of preventing and treating altitude illness. There is no scientific evidence to support its use. Do not travel with coca tea, it contains cocaine in very small amounts and is considered an illegal substance in most countries.

INJURIES

Motor vehicle accidents are a common cause of both injury and death. Learn the rules of driving, walking and cycling in the country you visit. Use seat belts if provided. Wear a helmet for cycling. Avoid driving after dark and after drinking alcohol. Check out fire exits in hotels and lock your hotel room at all times. Avoid the beach at night, and steer clear of areas where drug-related or political violence may occur. Drowning is also a common cause of death and injury. Read posted signs before swimming and do not drink alcohol and engage in water sports (eg. swimming, boating, waterskiing, etc).

MEDICAL INSURANCE

Buy adequate travel medical insurance that includes air evacuation. Always declare pre-existing medical conditions and any dangerous activities you plan on engaging in like bungee jumping, skiing, scuba diving etc. There are policies that don’t cover you at altitudes over 5,000 ft. Make certain you are covered for what you are doing. Read the fine print!

SUGGESTIONS FOR YOUR FIRST AID KIT

- Eyeglasses (and prescription for eyeglasses), sunglasses, contact lenses (and solutions)
- Insect spray or lotion that contains 20%-30% DEET or 20% Icaridin

- Sunscreen (SPF 30 or up-UVA & UVB protection)
- Sun hat
- Condoms, contraceptives as needed
- Feminine hygiene products

MEDICATIONS

- Anti malarial medication
- Acetaminophen or ibuprofen for pain or fever
- Imodium for diarrhea
- Pepto Bismol for diarrhea
- Gravol for nausea, motion sickness and may be used as a sleeping pill
- Antihistamine (Benadryl, Reactine)
- Antibiotics for treating diarrhea (prescription needed)
- Oral hydration packets (eg. Hydralite)
- Antifungal cream for fungal infections (jock itch, athlete’s foot) eg. Desenex, Canestan
- Medication for vaginal yeast infections if susceptible
- Antibiotic cream (eg. Polysporin) for cuts and insect bites
- Sting relief for insect bites (eg. Afterbite)
- Calamine lotion for skin rashes
- Eye drops for sore or dry eyes (eg. Blink)
- Melatonin for time-zone travel and jet leg
- Soluble fiber for constipation (eg. Metamucil)
- Medication to prevent altitude illness (prescription needed)

SIMPLE FIRST AID KIT

- Thermometer
- Scissors
- Tweezers to remove splinters and ticks
- Adhesive bandages of various sizes
- Gauze swabs and adhesive tape
- Bandages and safety pins to fasten them
- Nonadhesive dressings (such as Telfa)
- Antiseptic solution (eg. Povidone-iodine), antiseptic wipes
- Wound closure strips (steri-strips) or butterfly strips
- Moleskin for blisters

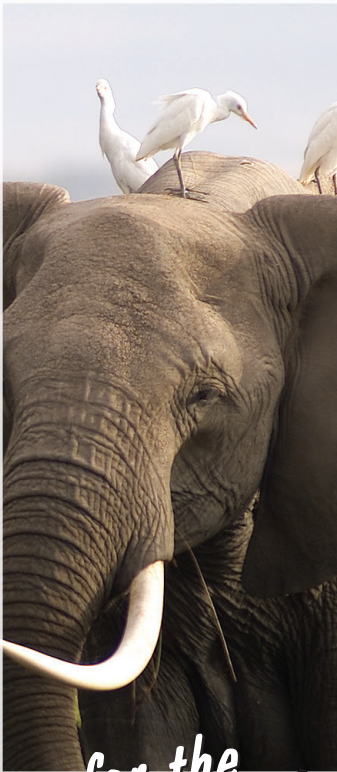
MISCELLANEOUS

- Hand sanitizer, alcohol swabs
- Iodine 2.5% - use to sterilize drinking water or clean wounds
- Whiz Easy for women (urinate standing up!)

IF YOU ARE TRAVELLING WITH CHILDREN:

- Disposable diapers (baby with diarrhea!)
- Barrier diaper rash cream (Zincofax or Vaseline)
- Children’s acetaminophen and Gravol
- Children’s mosquito repellent (10% DEET or 20% Icaridin)

**HEALTH
TIPS**



*for the
Tropical
Traveller*

HEALTH TIPS FOR THE TROPICAL TRAVELLER

The Travel Clinic wants to help you stay healthy while travelling. This pamphlet has information on how to travel safely. It is important not to depend completely on vaccines to prevent disease. Make sure to follow common sense health practices like avoiding unclean eating places, dirty toilets and dirty hands.

DRINKING

Be especially careful with drinking water. Water can be contaminated with germs that will give you diseases such as diarrhea, giardiasis, dysentery, cholera, typhoid, poliomyelitis, hepatitis A and parasitic worms. It is usually safe to drink tea, coffee, beer, well-known soft drinks, coconut milk (directly from coconut) and bottled water (make sure you break the seal on the bottle yourself).

Sterilize water you are unsure of with one of the following methods:

- **HEAT:** Boil water for one minute at a rolling boil and then let it cool to room temperature. You may want to add a pinch of salt to take away the flat taste.
- **IODINE 2.5%:** Add 5 drops of iodine for every liter of clear water; or add 10 drops of iodine for every litre of cold or cloudy water. Wait 30 minutes before using.

For those travellers who wish to avoid the taste and smell of iodine in their water, after the iodine has been added, add 50 mg of vitamin C to a liter of water and shake briefly.

People with thyroid disease and pregnant women should not use iodine.

- **CHLORINE:** chlorine products (Aquatabs) may also be used to sterilize water but its activity varies with temperature and other factors so it is less reliable than iodine. Using chlorine with a filter will kill more germs.
- **FILTERS:** You can remove particles in the water with a filter, but this will not sterilize the water or make it safe to drink. If you filter water, do it before you sterilize the water. If you use a filter, use a good quality ceramic filter with pore size of 0.2 microns or less and use a chemical method to sterilize the water after filtering it.
- **U.V. LIGHT** (eg. Steri-pens) At the time of writing (Oct 2017) there was not enough data to confidently recommend U.V. light in the form of Steri-pens to sterilize water in developing countries.

Use only ice cubes that are made from sterilized water. Use sterilized water for brushing teeth.

EATING

Food can be contaminated by:

- Unwashed hands
- Human sewage in fertilizer
- Unsafe water used in food preparation

Food that is contaminated can give you diseases such as typhoid, diarrhea, giardiasis and worms. There may be worms or worm cysts in under-cooked beef or pork, wild game, fish and water-plants such as seaweed or watercress.

TIPS FOR HEALTHY EATING

1. Eat only well cooked food served right after cooking. All meat and seafood should be thoroughly cooked. Do not eat raw seafood.
2. Never eat leftovers or food that has been sitting for a long time. Do not eat cold appetizers and dips at parties, buffets or food stalls. Avoid salad dressing, foods containing mayonnaise and pastries.
3. Avoid salads.
4. Eat raw fruits and vegetables only if you wash and peel them yourself. Throw out any with skin that is broken or bruised. Do not eat watermelon; water may have been injected so that it weighs more.
5. Boil milk before drinking or use tinned or powdered milk made with boiled water. Many countries do not pasteurize their milk.
6. Do not eat cheese, ice cream or yogurt that is made locally. It is best to avoid them unless you are certain that they are made with pasteurized milk.

SWIMMING

Swimming waters in the tropics are often polluted by local sewage. If you swim in these waters you may get an infection of the skin, eye, ear or intestine, especially if you put your head under water. Limit swimming to chlorinated pools and unpolluted ocean beaches.

Tropical fresh water may be infected with schistosomiasis. Schistosomiasis is an infection that develops after the larvae of a flatworm have penetrated the skin. This disease is mainly transmitted through swimming, bathing or wading in infected water. Water treated with chlorine or iodine is safe and salt water poses no risk. Bath water should be heated to 50°C for 5 minutes or treated with chlorine or iodine as done with drinking water. If exposed to fresh water, immediate and vigorous towel drying or application of rubbing alcohol to the exposed areas may reduce the risk of infection. New studies show that the application of a DEET containing insect repellent after exposure may kill the larvae under the skin. Schistosomiasis occurs in parts of tropical South America, Africa, the Middle East, India, China , Japan and South-East Asia.

Fresh water and soil may also be contaminated with bacteria that causes leptospirosis. These bacteria enter the skin through skin lesions or water logged skin. Leptospirosis can make you very ill with high fever, chills, headache, muscle aches and liver failure. High risk areas for leptospirosis include Hawaii, the Caribbean, Central America and Southeast Asia but it is found globally in tropical areas. The main way to prevent this disease is to avoid exposure to potentially contaminated water, soil and mud. Doxycycline can be taken to prevent leptospirosis. If you’re taking doxycycline to prevent malaria, this will also prevent leptospirosis.

In tropical waters, watch for jellyfish, sea anemones and corals, all of which can give nasty stings. If you are stung, rinse the affected body parts with isopropyl alcohol, vinegar or seawater, and scrape or shave the area gently to remove any remaining stingers. **Do not** rub the area or rinse with fresh water or tap water. Acetaminophen, aspirin or ibuprofen will help ease pain and antihistamines ie. Benadryl can relieve itching and swelling. If symptoms are severe or if signs of anaphylactic reaction are present, seek medical help immediately.

Strong currents and submerged objects can cause injury and drowning. Before diving into unfamiliar waters, check out what lies below and don’t touch strange objects.

There are usually no lifeguards at beaches in tropical and developing countries. Never swim alone or at night. Know what to do to help yourself or others if injured or in danger.

JET LAG

Flying across time zones may cause a change in the normal sleep and wake cycle of your body. As a result, you may feel tired, have an upset stomach and have problems getting to sleep. These symptoms of jet lag will disappear gradually as you get used to the new time zone. It helps if you try to follow these tips during air travel.

1. Cut down on smoking and drinking alcohol.
2. Eat light meals.
3. Sleep as much as possible.
4. When you reach your destination, sleep and eat according to the local time.
5. Some travelers find that melatonin helps to readjust their sleep/wake cycle. Follow directions on package.

ECONOMY CLASS SYNDROME

Economy class syndrome or deep vein thrombosis (DVT) is the name given to the formation of blood clots in leg veins. Most cases occur in travellers flying economy class for more than 12 hours although it can also occur in first class and on shorter flights. A serious complication of DVT is a pulmonary embolism. This is when a blood clot travels to the lung and blocks an artery. This can be life-threatening and needs immediate medical attention.

High risk travellers are pregnant women, the overweight, the elderly , smokers, people with coronary artery disease and certain blood disorders. To reduce the risk:

1. Exercise! Stand, walk, flex ankles, curl toes for 5 minutes every hour.
2. Drink 8 oz of water every 2 hours, or enough to maintain pale coloured urine.
3. High risk travellers should consider graduated compression socks/tights that exert 20-30 mm Hg at the ankle.

SUN

A painful sunburn will spoil your holiday fun and increase the chance of skin cancer. Wear sunscreen with a Sun Protection Factor (SPF) of at least 30 UVA and UVB and limit your time in the sun between 11:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. Wear hats with brims and sunglasses. This will still allow you to tan without getting a burn.

AVOIDING DISEASES CARRIED BY MOSQUITOES AND OTHER INSECTS

Diseases that are spread by mosquitoes in tropical countries include malaria, dengue fever, Japanese encephalitis, and yellow fever. It is important to avoid insect bites even if you are taking malaria medication or have been vaccinated against yellow fever or Japanese encephalitis.

MOSQUITO PRECAUTIONS

1. Stay in air conditioned accommodation.
2. Use mosquito nets on beds and use screens on windows and doors.
3. Use an insect repellent spray or lotion to keep bugs away. Use it during the daytime and the evening. The most useful repellents contain at least 20% N.N. Diethyl-metatoluamide (DEET) or 20% Icaridin.
4. Wear light coloured clothes that cover your legs and arms.
5. Stay indoors during the evening when mosquitoes are most active.
6. Use unscented make-up, deodorant, soap and shampoo. Insects are attracted to perfume.
7. Apply insect repellent 15-30 minutes after sunscreen application.

DENGUE FEVER

Dengue fever is a mosquito transmitted viral disease occurring chiefly in tropical and sub-tropical areas. Outbreaks usually occur during and shortly after the rainy season. Dengue fever causes headache, fever, and severe muscle aches. The mosquitoes that transmit dengue fever usually bite during the day and are most common in urban areas. It may be found in rural areas and is rarely found above 4,000 feet. The traveller should avoid mosquito bites by using insect repellents and other mosquito precautions.

CHIKUNGUNYA

Chikungunya is a viral disease that causes flu like symptoms and joint pain. It is spread by daytime biting mosquitoes and tends to be an urban disease. Transmission occurs in S.E. Asia, India, Caribbean, Africa and Indian Ocean Islands and is expected to spread widely. Use daytime mosquito precautions to avoid disease.



RABIES

Rabies is a fatal disease caused by a virus that is transmitted by the saliva of a rabid mammal. Transmission usually occurs through a bite, scratch, lick on an open wound or more rarely through saliva landing on a mucous membrane such as an eye or mouth. There have also been reports of rabies contracted through aerosolized virus in badly infested bat caves. Once contracted, rabies is ALWAYS fatal. Any wound inflicted by an animal should be scrubbed well with soap and water immediately and medical advice obtained.

Rabies can be prevented by pre-exposure immunization, 3 doses at 0 time, 7 days and 21-28 days. Even if immunized, if you are bitten by a suspect rabid mammal, you need 2 further doses of vaccine IMMEDIATELY (days 0 & 3) to ensure high antibody levels. You do not need Rabies Immune Globulin (RIG) if you have been pre-immunized against rabies.

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RABIES

If you are bitten or scratched by an animal that is highly suspect for rabies (dogs, monkeys, cats and bats in developing countries), you need to scrub the wound well with soap and water and seek medical advice immediately. If rabies is a risk and you have not had pre-exposure vaccination, you will need a shot of Rabies Immune Globulin (RIG) and 4 doses of rabies vaccine at 0 time, 3 days, 7 days and 14 days. (There are 3 other approved post-exposure rabies series that include more than 1 dose at each time and also intra-dermal administration.) If you have any concerns about the vaccine you are being offered please contact the clinic at 1-604-736-9244 or TC601@vch.ca. Vaccine is usually available in developing countries, RIG is not. If you are in a country that cannot give you RIG, travel immediately to a country where you can get it.



YELLOW FEVER


Yellow fever is a serious disease caused by a virus. It is spread by mosquitoes in the tropical areas of Africa and South America. One injection protects you almost 100% for life. It is still important to avoid mosquito bites while visiting these areas.

Some countries require proof of vaccination. In these situations, you must have an injection at least 10 days prior to visiting that country and travel with an official yellow fever certificate.

After an injection, there may be some redness or soreness around the injection area. We **Do Not** recommend the vaccine for:

- Children under 9 months
- Pregnant women
- People with a life-threatening allergy to eggs
- People who have problems with their immune systems
- People who have problems with their thymus gland (not thyroid)
- People who have multiple sclerosis

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5 – 10 days after vaccination 2 – 5 % of people report headaches, muscle aches and low-grade fever.

In people over 60 being vaccinated against yellow fever for the first time, there is a slightly increased, although still very rare, chance of serious side effects after yellow fever vaccination. The chance of having a serious side effect in people aged 60-69 years old is 4.4/100,000. The chance of having a severe side effect in people aged ≥ 70 is 6.4/100,000. This vaccine should only be given to people over 60 who need it for protection. Those who only need it for entry requirements can be given a yellow fever waiver certificate.




CHOLERA

Cholera is a serious infection of the intestine. It is found in Asia, the Middle East, South America, Africa and some parts of Europe. The chance of a traveller getting cholera is very low. But it is important to be careful if you are going to these areas.

The bacteria that causes cholera is spread mainly through water and food. To protect yourself, follow the advice about eating, drinking and swimming in “Health Tips for the Tropical Traveller”. Cholera is not usually spread from person to person.

A person with cholera has severe watery bowel movements. The body loses much of its water and salt quickly and this must be replaced. In some cases, antibiotic medicine is helpful.

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The antibiotics used for treating traveller's diarrhea, are also effective treatments for cholera.

There is a vaccine called Dukoral that can be used to prevent cholera. Two oral doses 1-6 weeks apart provide protection for 2 years. This vaccine also provides some protection against traveller's diarrhea for 3 months.




HEPATITIS A

Hepatitis A is also called Infectious Hepatitis. It is caused by a virus that is found throughout the world except there is low risk in North America, Northern and Western Europe, Australia, New Zealand and Japan. The virus is spread to other people mainly through the body wastes of someone with Hepatitis A. If these wastes are not properly disposed of, the virus can get into the water, shellfish, fruit, vegetables or other foods. To kill the virus, food must be thoroughly cooked and water boiled for one minute. In addition, food and water must be handled properly so they do not become contaminated. One of the best ways to prevent Hepatitis A is thorough handwashing with soap and water after using the toilet.

Hepatitis A vaccine is recommended for all travellers.

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Hepatitis A vaccine: A small amount of killed hepatitis A virus is injected to which your body forms antibodies. One injection gives protection for 1 year. A booster dose is given 6-12 months after. Once you have had 2 doses of vaccine, immunity will last for a lifetime. After the injection there may be some redness and soreness around the injection area.



HEPATITIS B

Hepatitis B is a serious infection. This virus causes damage to the liver and can range from mild to severe to life threatening. Some people with hepatitis feel very sick and 1% of them die from the disease. Other people may have only a mild case and not even know they have hepatitis. Some people who are infected with the Hepatitis B virus become carriers and may infect others.

Hepatitis B is common throughout the world. When you travel it is important to be careful.

You may become infected with Hepatitis B if you:

- Have sexual contact with someone who has Hepatitis B
- Share needles (including tattoo, body piercing, electrolysis or acupuncture needles)
- Receive medical or dental care (injections, blood transfusions, sutures) in a country with substandard medical care.

The Hepatitis B vaccine can help protect you from infection. The vaccine is usually given in three injections over six months and provides lifetime immunity. If short of time, an accelerated version is available. Afterwards, there may be some redness and soreness around the injected area.



JAPANESE ENCEPHALITIS (JE)

This is a serious but rare brain infection, caused by a virus spread by night-time biting mosquitoes in Asian countries. The mosquito bites an animal that has the virus, then bites a human, passing on the virus. JE is rare in travellers, there have been 78 cases reported in travellers in the past 39 years. It's serious, 20% of cases died and 50% of the survivors had brain damage. Thailand and Bali account for most cases of JE in travellers. The estimated risks are 1/400,000 per visit to Thailand and 1/1M per visit to Bali. Travellers going to Thailand and Bali for 4 weeks or more at any time of year should consider JE vaccination. For travellers to other countries in Asia, vaccine is recommended for rural travel of 4 weeks or more during the rainy months (approximately June-October). 2 injections 7-28 days apart are needed. Boosters should be given once per year if risk continues. After the injection there may be some redness or soreness around the injection area.

REMEMBER: Even with vaccination, always follow good mosquito precautions, listed under “Health Tips for the Tropical Traveller”.



TYPHOID FEVER

Typhoid Fever is found all over the world. The bacteria that causes typhoid is spread through contaminated food and water. The best way to avoid this disease is to make sure that food and water are safe. Look for information on how to eat and drink safely in “Health Tips for the Tropical Traveller”.

The symptoms of typhoid fever are fever, severe headache, rash and constipation. Severe cases can cause intestinal hemorrhage, brain dysfunction and death. Treatment is with antibiotics. After illness some people can be carriers of the bacteria that causes typhoid fever. Typhoid carriers will be excluded from food handling and patient care.

The vaccine for typhoid does not protect you completely. Even if you have the vaccine, it is possible to get typhoid fever.

INJECTABLE TYPHOID VACCINE

The most common side effect is redness and soreness around the injection area. Some people may have a fever or headache. Studies show that this vaccine protects for 2 years.

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ORAL TYPHOID VACCINE

Oral typhoid vaccine is taken as 4 capsules, 1 every other day, 1 hour before eating and 2 hours after eating. Common side effects are stomach upset. Studies show that this vaccine protects for 4 years.

MENINGOCOCCAL MENINGITIS

This infection attacks the outer lining of the brain and spinal cord. It is caused by bacteria that get into the fluid around the brain and spinal cord. It is spread from one person to another in much the same way as a cold is spread, through direct contact with someone who has meningitis or when someone with meningitis coughs, sneezes or spits. If you are travelling to an area where there is an outbreak of meningococcal meningitis, we recommend that you have an injection of vaccine.

Travellers should receive the quadrivalent conjugate meningococcal vaccine. This protects against 4 types of the disease: A, C, Y, and W-135.

VACCINE (*Quadrivalent Conjugate*)

The vaccine has only a few side effects. There may be redness and soreness at the injection site. It gives protection for 3 years. Travellers to Mecca, Saudi Arabia may be required to show proof of meningococcal meningitis vaccination within the last three years.

Check with the Travel Clinic for countries that have outbreaks of meningococcal meningitis.

TRAVELLERS' DIARRHEA

HOW TO AVOID TRAVELLER'S DIARRHEA

The best way to avoid traveller's diarrhea is to make sure that your food and drink is not contaminated. "Health Tips for the Tropical Traveller" has good advice on how to eat and drink safely while you are travelling.

Another good way to prevent traveller's diarrhea is to be vaccinated. There is a vaccine called Dukoral that provides 20-40% protection against enterotoxigenic E coli. This bacteria causes 60% of all travellers' diarrhea. Dukoral is administered as 2 oral doses 1-6 weeks apart. The 2 doses should be completed 1 week prior to travelling. Dukoral provides some protection against traveller's diarrhea for 3 months and provides 2 years protection against cholera.

Another medicine that is usually safe for someone in good health is Pepto-Bismol. Chew two tablets of Pepto-Bismol four times per day before meals and at bedtime. Anyone who has problems with salicylates should not use Pepto-Bismol until they check with their doctor. Salicylates are also found in ASA.

WHAT TO DO IF YOU GET DIARRHEA

Talk to a doctor if you have diarrhea that is not improving in three days. Drink lots of fluids. The best fluid is a glucose-electrolyte mixture. You can make this mixture yourself. Here are the recipes:


GLASS #1

8 ounces of fruit juice
½ tsp. corn syrup, sugar or honey
pinch of table salt

GLASS #2

8 ounces of boiled or carbonated water
¼ tsp. baking soda

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Drink some from Glass #1, and then some from Glass #2, and repeat this until you are no longer thirsty. Drug stores sell a product called Gastrolyte that contains this mixture. Sip one glass (250 ml or 8 ounces) for every bowel movement. Drink more if still thirsty or if urine output is low.

It is possible to buy Imodium without a prescription. This product slows down the diarrhea but does not treat it. It is for people over the age of 2. Check the dosage carefully for children 2-12. It should not be taken if you have a fever or bloody stools with diarrhea. Never take more than 8 tablets in a 24 hour period.

Traveller's diarrhea may be accompanied by nausea and vomiting. Dimenhydrinate (Gravol) in either oral or suppository form is extremely useful. This can be purchased without prescription, follow the instructions on the package.

Some travelers may wish to carry an antibiotic called Azithromycin that treats diarrhea. Azithromycin is taken as 2 tablets (500 mg) at the onset of severe diarrhea, then 1 tablet (250 mg) on day 2 & 3. 80% of people are cured of their diarrhea in one day and can stop treatment. If diarrhea continues, take Azithromycin for a maximum of 3 days, until you are better. Azithromycin is available in Canada by prescription only.

Children under 18 years may also take azithromycin to treat diarrhea. This is one dose daily for 3 days. The suspension for young children is dispensed as a powder that must be mixed with sterile water. The pharmacist will provide the instructions with the medicine.

Remember that many products that you can buy in other countries may be dangerous. Do not take them until you get good medical advice.



S.T.D.

SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED DISEASES

In some areas of the world, there is a greater risk of being exposed to STD's (sexually transmitted diseases). Travellers who have sex with unknown partners from these areas may be taking the chance of getting a sexually transmitted disease. These diseases include syphilis, gonorrhea, chlamydial infection, hepatitis B, and HIV the virus that causes AIDS. (HIV stands for human immunodeficiency virus).

You risk getting sexually transmitted disease if you have anal, vaginal, or oral sex without a condom and:

- Have sex with more than one partner.
- Have sex with someone you don't know.
- Have sex with prostitutes.
- Have sex with anyone who has more than one partner.
- Have sex with anyone who has genital discharge, genital warts, genital sores or cuts.
- Have sex with anyone who has a known STD or HIV or AIDS.
- Have oral anal contact; it can result in infection of the rectum or intestine.
- Have oral genital contact (with oral "cold sores").

Protect yourself from STD's. If you are a male, always use a latex condom. If you are a female, always use a diaphragm and spermicide. Also, insist that your partner use a condom. See a doctor immediately if you take part in any of the high risk situations listed above or if you develop symptoms of an STD.



AIDS

(Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome)

AIDS is a disease that attacks the body's immune system. As a result, the body is not able to fight other diseases that may be life threatening.

The virus that causes AIDS is called HIV (Human Immunodeficiency Virus). There is no vaccine or medicine to prevent or cure AIDS. People all around the world have HIV/AIDS. Many have died from it.

HIV IS SPREAD IN THESE WAYS

- People can get the virus if they have sex with a person who has HIV.
- People can get the virus by sharing I.V. needles with a person who has HIV.
- The blood supply in some countries is not safe so it is possible to get HIV from a blood transfusion in these countries.
- A pregnant woman who has the virus might pass it to her unborn child. A nursing mother may pass the virus to her child in her breast milk.

PROTECT YOURSELF FROM AIDS

- Do not allow the body fluids of other people to enter your body. This includes semen, blood, and vaginal fluid.
- Use a latex condom (bought in Canada or the US) for all types of sexual intercourse.
- Always use new, clean needles. Do not share needles.
- Make sure that needles are new or properly sterilized when you get tattoos, electrolysis, acupuncture or have your ears or other body parts pierced.

Remember, HIV and AIDS can be prevented.

AFTER VACCINATION CARE TRAVEL CLINIC

You may need one or more vaccinations to protect you while you are travelling. The vaccines usually do not cause serious reactions or side effects. The most common side effect is redness or soreness after an injection. This is a local reaction at the spot where the needle enters the body. It often helps to put cool cloths or ice packs on the injection site. You may want to take some acetaminophen (Tylenol) if it is very painful.

Some vaccines cause side effects such as fever and headache. You may feel like you have the “flu”. It often helps to take acetaminophen and get some rest.

There is a very small chance that a vaccine will cause a severe allergic reaction which is life-threatening. This happens only rarely. Most of these reactions happen within a few minutes after the vaccination. It is also possible to have an allergic reaction later.

The symptoms of an allergic reaction are:

- Problems breathing or swallowing
- Swelling around the mouth or the tongue
- Hoarseness or problems talking
- A wheezing or rattle in the chest when breathing
- Feeling very itchy all over

If you have any of these symptoms after a vaccination, get medical help immediately. The best place to go is a hospital emergency department.

Please remember to tell the Travel Clinic about any serious reaction to a vaccine. We fill out a form and report the reaction to a central Canadian registry. This way we can tell how vaccines are performing once they are in use.