

Plan Ahead for Travel

Brown Health Services Patient Education Series

Planning Ahead

Allow time before your departure to obtain needed vaccines, medications, and appointments. We recommend 6-8 weeks prior to departure.

Your first step is to visit the non-commercial governmental website: www.cdc.gov/travel. Make note of the required or recommended vaccinations and medications, especially the specific drugs for malaria prevention useful in the particular countries you are visiting. Bring this information to your Health Services appointment for obtaining travel medications or vaccines.

If you are traveling with a program, bring any information the program has given you about required medications, vaccinations, requirements for statements of good health, etc.

Brown Health Services cannot give the yellow fever vaccine or Japanese encephalitis vaccine. If these are needed, your provider will instruct you how to proceed. You must obtain them from one of the Travel Clinics locally:

- Passport Health in Providence, RI (401)228-0038 and (401)228-0090
- Brown Medicine Travel Clinic in Riverside, RI (401)649-4080
- CVS Minute Clinic in Providence, RI (866)389-2727

If you have not been seen for a travel appointment at Brown University Health Services and are consulting the travel clinic independently, a fee is charged by the Travel Clinic. This includes a packet of good general information, a consultation specific to your trip, and the prescriptions for medications. Immunizations needed are charged individually. Medication may not be covered by insurance; vaccinations may not be covered by insurance and

are the student's responsibility for payment. If there is any question, consult your insurance company prior to receiving vaccinations or medication.

Know the Details of Your Trip

- Where are you going?
- Different countries have different vaccine and medicine requirements.
- Will you follow major tourist routes, or will your trip take you off the beaten track into rural areas?
- Do you have any medical conditions that may require attention during your trip?

What Other Medical Preparations Do I Need to Think About?

1. Glasses and Contact Lenses:
 - Take an extra pair with you.
 - Take a copy of your eyeglass prescription.
2. Medications
 - If indicated, antimalarial medication must be taken on schedule before you get there, while you are there, and after you return home.
 - Take enough of your usual prescription drugs for your entire time away.
 - Keep medication in its original "prescription-labeled" container, protect it from heat, and carry it with you on the plane.
 - Know why you are taking the medication, the proper dose, and the generic or scientific name of the medication.

- If you take injection medication, carry a doctor's prescription for the syringes.
3. Wear Medic Alert identification indicating specific conditions or allergies (ie diabetes, allergic to penicillin, etc.).
 4. If you have a chronic disease, ask your medical provider to write a brief summary of your medical history to carry with you.
 5. Personal Travel Health Kit: This list is formulated for regions of higher risk and less access to health care. Your kit can be tailored to your specific needs, and may include prescription medications (e.g., for malaria, traveler's diarrhea, altitude sickness). Additionally, it may include:
 - Antacid/antidiarrheal medication for upset stomach/travelers diarrhea
 - Antifungal creams/suppositories
 - Antihistamines/decongestants for the common cold
 - Aspirin, acetaminophen or ibuprofen for fever, muscle aches, or pain relief
 - Athlete's foot remedy
 - Calamine lotion
 - Contraceptive supplies
 - First Aid/Emergency Supplies: Ace Wrap (elastic bandage) Adhesive tape
 - Antiseptic cream
 - Band-Aids and gauze
 - Flashlight and extra batteries
 - Matches
 - Needle, thread, and safety pins
 - Pencil and paper
 - Scissor and Tweezers
 - Immunization certificates
 - Insect repellent containing DEET for the skin; other repellents, mosquito netting, and/ or protective clothing may be helpful if mosquito borne illnesses such as Zika, Malaria, Dengue, Chikungunya, Japanese encephalitis, Yellow fever are endemic to the region.
 - Motion sickness remedy
 - Razors, so you have a clean supply
 - Plastic bags
 - Menstrual supplies (take extra), toilet paper, moist towelettes, and antibacterial soap
 - Sunscreen: The higher the SPF, the greater the protection; Lip balm, sunglasses, and a hat
 - Vitamins that you regularly take
 - Water purification tablets if appropriate.

Animal Contact

Avoid close contact with dogs, cats, other pets, or wild animals. If bitten:

- Wash the wound with copious amounts of soap and running water. Flush it well!
- Assume the animal is rabid.
- Seek medical attention for animal bites immediately.

Travelers' Diarrhea

Get advice from your medical provider. Sometimes an antibiotic can be prescribed for use if travelers' diarrhea develops. Always have access to beverages that are safe to drink, especially those that will replace sugar and salt. To avoid dehydration, your body needs 10-12 (8 ounce) glasses of fluid a day when you have diarrhea.

Ear Pain When Flying

This is due to the eustachian tubes (which equalize the pressure inside and outside the eardrums) being congested and unable to open/close normally. Chewing gum or swallowing helps them to open. Ear Planes, a kind of ear plug, also helps with this problem when worn during takeoff and landing. They are available in many drugstores, including the Health Services Pharmacy.

General Safe Travel Principles

Protect your passport, health insurance ID, valuable documents, and other valuable items.

- Find out about your health insurance coverage. Can you use it outside this country? If so, how do you use it? If not, do you need to purchase travel insurance?
- Travel with a companion if at all possible.
- Know which diseases and risks are most likely in the areas where you plan to visit or travel.

Infectious diseases are generally spread:

- a. From person to person by direct contact, including sexual contact
- b. From person to person by indirect contact (e.g. handling contaminated objects)

Wash uncooked foods in bottled or boiled water before eating or eat only peeled fruits and vegetables. Be wary of eating salad.

Avoid purchasing food or drink from street vendors.

Drink bottled or boiled water and use it to brush your teeth. Avoid ice cubes. Bottled beverages are usually safe to drink.

Do not bathe or swim anywhere unless you are certain that the water is safe/sanitary.

Wash your hands often. Food and water can be risky in developed, industrial, or tourist areas, as well as in areas off the beaten track. Be careful everywhere.

- c. Through contaminated food or water.
- d. By insects or animals.

After Your Return

Finish all malaria medication as prescribed, on schedule.

Some areas of the world pose a higher risk for exposure to specific infectious diseases such as TB. Even if you have no symptoms your provider may advise you to have a TB test after your return, including but not limited to cases where your travel involved medical work, or a

critical for you to be aware of while away. Also, optional international health insurance coverage can be arranged. See www.brown.edu/insurance for more detailed information on how to register.

See - cdc.gov/travel/destinations - for complete travel information. This is also available as a phone app.

For a list of English-speaking doctors abroad contact:

www.iamat.org

Travel Assistance Program

When traveling on behalf of Brown University, you are encouraged to register your trip with the University's International Travel Assistance Program, International SOS. This allows the University to communicate with you in the event that there is country specific travel information that may be