

## Hepatitis and HIV

These diseases can be transmitted by blood products, medical procedures without sterile equipment, sharing of needles [e.g. tattooing, body piercing, and acupuncture]. These diseases can also be transmitted through drug abuse and sexual contact, so always use a condom with a new or short-term partner, especially on holiday!



## Air Travel

It is sensible on long haul flights to be comfortable in your seat.



Try to exercise your legs, feet and toes while sitting every 1½ hours or so, also take short walks as possible. Drink plenty of water and limit alcohol as this leads to dehydration. If you have experienced previous problems with

DVT or clots, have had recent surgery or have a plaster cast on, your nurse will have discussed these issues with you.

## Insurance cover

Take out adequate insurance for your trip. If you have existing medical conditions – ensure that your insurance company knows about them. If you are travelling to a European country the E111 has now been replaced by a European Health Insurance Card [ EHIC ], which entitles you to free or reduced cost healthcare in many European countries. This card is free and can be obtained by applying online, at [www.dh.gov.uk/travellers](http://www.dh.gov.uk/travellers). You can also telephone 0845 606 2030 or pick up an application form from a Post office.



## Web sites that may give further information.

Department of Health, select "Health Advice For Travellers":

[www.dh.gov.uk/PolicyAndGuidance](http://www.dh.gov.uk/PolicyAndGuidance)

Malaria:

[www.malariahotspots.co.uk](http://www.malariahotspots.co.uk)

UK Travel Health site:

[www.travelHealth.co.uk](http://www.travelHealth.co.uk)

BBC Travel health site:

[www.bbc.co.uk/health/travel](http://www.bbc.co.uk/health/travel)

Travel Health online:

[www.tripprep.com](http://www.tripprep.com)

Gap year site:

[www.gapyear.com](http://www.gapyear.com)

Lonely Planet:

[www.Lonelyplanet.com](http://www.Lonelyplanet.com)

Diabetes UK:

[www.diabetes.co.uk](http://www.diabetes.co.uk)



Castlehead  
Medical  
Centre

# Travel Health Information Pack



**This travel information pack has been produced by the Doctors and Nurses at Castlehead Medical Centre to ensure that those of our clients travelling abroad have an enjoyable and safe time.**

In addition to our Individual Travel Health Consultations we have developed this leaflet to back up some of the issues discussed with the Nurse and to give further information on health and safety issues for those travelling abroad.

## Water

Many diseases can be caught from drinking or even swimming in contaminated water. Remember that contamination can also occur through washing salads/vegetables, brushing teeth or using ice cubes. Use in order of preference:-

- 1 Boiled water
- 2 Bottled water or canned drinks.
- 3 Water treated by sterilizing agent.

Avoid swimming in water where there may be parasites. Some fresh water has them – **check!**



## Accidents

Unfortunately swimming and road traffic accidents are major causes of death and injury for travellers. Avoid alcohol before swimming, check the water depth and be aware of currents before swimming/diving. If possible avoid hiring mopeds or motorcycles and use only reliable taxi firms. Don't drink and drive.

## Food



Contaminated food is a common source of many diseases abroad. You can avoid them by only eating well cooked fresh food; ensuring meat is thoroughly cooked and never drinking/eating unpasteurised milk or cheese. It is wise to avoid salads and fruit that cannot be peeled.

## Traveller's Diarrhoea

This is the most common illness affecting traveller's abroad and there is no vaccine against it. The risk of illness is higher in some countries than others. It is caused by eating and/or drinking water contaminated by bacteria, viruses or parasites. The main danger of the illness is dehydration, which if not treated, can kill. Treatment therefore is rehydration. In severe cases, and particularly in young children, commercially prepared rehydration solution is extremely useful. **Contact medical help** if the affected person has a high temperature, blood in stool, diarrhoea for more than 24 hours or becomes confused.

## Insect Bites

Mosquitoes, flies ticks and bugs can cause many different diseases. Some bite at night but some during the day. Avoid being bitten by covering up the skin as much as possible. Use insect repellent e.g. DEET or eucalyptus oil based spays and creams, [35% DEET is recommended in the tropics]. In a malarial area, spray rooms with knockdown insecticide sprays and sleep under a treated mosquito net.



## Malaria



Take this seriously; it can be fatal. Try to avoid being bitten by mosquitoes using the above advice. It is particularly important to remember to take your antimalarials for the prescribed amount of time after return to the UK.

Malaria can present up to a year after being bitten by an infected mosquito. Therefore take, unexplained flu like illness seriously even after return and **seek medical attention**. Also alert the doctor to the fact that you may have been exposed to malaria.

## Animal Bites

Rabies is present in many parts of the world. If a person develops rabies, death is 100% certain. **Remember – DO NOT TOUCH ANY ANIMAL**, even dogs and cats. If you are bitten or licked on broken skin in an affected country, wash the wound thoroughly with soap and running water for 10 minutes, cleanse the wound with antiseptic and then seek medical advice immediately. Remember, even if you have had rabies vaccine prior to travel, you still need to obtain post exposure treatment as soon as possible.



## Sun and Heat

Sun and heatstroke can cause serious problems to travellers. Both are preventable. Remember to cover up, use high factor sun block and increase sun exposure gradually.