



VACCINATIONS FOR TRAVEL

Vaccinations are an important aspect of your pre-departure preparation and should be considered 4-6 weeks prior to travel.

1. To provide protection against diseases that are more common at your overseas destinations than at home
2. To comply with national health authority requirements.

Some vaccinations need time to work some require a course of more than one injection. (Hepatitis B, Rabies, Japanese Encephalitis)

Recommendations will depend on the following:

- your past medical and vaccination history
- your age
- your destination
- the standard of accommodation
- rural or urban travel
- the time of year - wet season versus dry, hot or cold
- the length of stay
- the altitude

Routine immunizations are those included in the national recommended schedule (for both children and adults).

Vaccines are rarely 100% protective and are designed for relatively uncommon, life-threatening infections. Travellers must also pay attention to the prevention and management of more common health hazards.

GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

- Yellow fever vaccine is the only vaccine subject to International Health Regulations. This vaccine is relevant when travelling to Africa or South America. (see below)
- Meningitis vaccine is required by Saudia Arabia for pilgrims travelling to the Haj. (see below)
- Some countries require certain vaccinations for children entering school

Other vaccinations, while not compulsory, are recommended for your own protection. Recommendations are usually based on region of travel.

Low Risk Areas

Western Europe, North America, Japan, Korea, New Zealand or Singapore.

Apart from air pollution and influenza during the winter months, travel to these destinations usually presents no greater risk than travel within Australia.

Travellers to these destinations are advised to check their routine immunisations. Air travel over long distances raises concerns about deep vein thrombosis. Pre-existing health problems should be reviewed prior to travel, and, where a complex problem exists, a doctors letter should be carried.



The over 65's, and those with a history of heart or lung disease, should have Influenza and Pneumococcal vaccine. All travellers passing through airports and commuter transport systems should consider the current flu vaccine, especially in the cooler months.

Those born prior to 1985 are unlikely to have had routine hepatitis B vaccination. Hepatitis B is a vaccine-preventable sexually transmitted infection.

Those born between 1966 and 1980 may have had inadequate measles vaccination. Those with no history of having had chicken pox can now be protected by vaccination.

Moderate or High Risk Areas

Travellers to less developed regions of the world including Africa, the Middle East, Central and South America, the Caribbean, Asia and the Pacific are usually offered further vaccinations, plus or minus antimalarials.

Vaccine preventable diseases include Hepatitis A, Typhoid Fever and Cholera, (transmitted by contaminated food and drink) Meningitis, Japanese Encephalitis, Rabies and Tuberculosis. Health problems for which vaccines are not available include malaria, dengue fever, schistosomiasis, dysentery, and most sexually transmitted diseases.

Travellers to countries which require certain vaccinations to satisfy local health requirements.

Yellow Fever.

Vaccination certification may be required from travellers who have recently been to Sub Saharan Africa and South America. The certificate is valid for 10 years starting 10 days after vaccination. You may be refused entry or detained in quarantine if a country requires vaccination and you arrive without it.

If travelling to Africa or South America, seek information from a travel medicine centre such as Globe Medical about the requirements. The Yellow Fever vaccination can only be given in WHO designated clinics.

Cholera.

Vaccination is no longer required by any country. It is extremely uncommon for travellers to catch cholera, which occurs mainly in the poor who cannot access clean water. Occasionally, at remote borders, a traveller is asked to show a certificate. The new cholera vaccine, Dukoral, also provides some protection against Enterotoxigenic E Coli, one of the commonest causes of traveller's diarrhoea. This vaccine is useful where an individual is more prone to gut infections in a high risk destination.

Meningitis Vaccine (Meningococcal ACWY strains)

This vaccine is protective for 3 years and valid from 10 days after vaccination. It is required by Saudi Arabian authorities for pilgrims travelling to the Haj. Records of polio vaccination may also be checked.