

Travel Clinic Information

Preparing for Travel

- Complete the travel questionnaire online or obtain one via your surgery reception. (All registered patients, should hand the completed questionnaire in to your own surgery reception, where it will be forwarded to Aldershot Centre for Health Travel Clinic on your behalf).
- For routine holidays of under 1 month duration book your Travel clinic appointment approximately 6-8 weeks before departure.
- You may need to discuss any malaria requirements, and your suitability for these medications at the Travel Clinic.
- Travellers who intend to visit several countries, or travel on a long term basis are advised to visit the Travel Clinic ideally up to 6 months ahead of departure.
- A Dental examination is recommended for any long term traveller as part of your preparation.
- Ensure any medication that you take is sufficient for duration of the holiday, and order an extra prescription to carry with you.
- Medical packs, and first aid kits should be considered for any longer term traveller, and should also include basic medicines for first aid treatment, and water sterilising tablets, as well as needles and syringes for emergency use.
- Ensure your passport is valid for outbound and the return journey- particularly if staying overseas for lengthy periods. Check visa requirements for each destination.
- Photocopy important documents,- items such as Passport, Travellers Cheques, Insurance documents, and bank cards for safekeeping in your luggage whilst travelling.
- Check the political climate of your destination. Foreign and Commonwealth Office advice is available on Ceefax page 470 or via website www.fco.gov.uk
- Finally research your areas of travel, in order to understand local culture and customs and to comply with the Country's regulations.

"TRAVEL TIP

Know how to contact the British Embassy overseas in case of an Emergency."

Visiting the Travel Clinic

Initial Assessment is undertaken prior to, AND during your consultation with the Practice Nurse at the Travel Clinic. Consideration is given to the following criteria:

- Countries or Areas to be visited
- Duration of stay
- Departure date

These factors are essential in formulating appropriate immunisation and anti-malarial advice. Malaria recommendations are constantly being reviewed, and requirements change, as in certain areas seasonal effects reflect recommendations.

Travel involving detailed itineraries require thorough examination for appropriate and effective advice. This is particularly important for lengthy travel which may extend over several months, and through several malarial zones.

Certain additional vaccinations may also be indicated for particular types of travel, which require several months to complete, and necessitate earlier attendance at the Travel Clinic.

"TRAVEL TIP

Give the full itinerary for lengthy travelling to the Travel Clinic well in advance of your departure date."

- Purpose of trip
- Type of accommodation
- High risk activities

Different types of travel present different risks both to personal health and safety. It is essential that the travel details are given as fully as possible in order to ascertain a specific risk assessment for you.

For example:

A short Business trip to a first class hotel in Africa, would be considered as a lesser risk than a Backpacker, camping out and travelling through urban and rural areas in the same country. Although anti-malarial cover may be similar, vaccination requirements, and some advice will differ.

Finally consideration should be given to obtaining adequate Insurance cover for High risk activities. Refer to Accidents and Insurance for further information.

"TRAVEL FACTS

Activities undertaken whilst holidaying are noted as being some of the most common causes of accidents whilst travelling abroad."

Special Risk Groups

- Diabetes
- Respiratory/Heart Problems
- Epilepsy
- HIV Positive Travellers
- Asplenic Travellers
- Disability & Travel
- Pregnant Women/Newborn Babies
- Children
- The Over 60's
- Backpacker/Gap Year Travel

People who have health concerns may require specific advice relating to management of their condition whilst abroad.

It is wise to obtain advice about your personal health management programme.

Here are some groups of people who would find it useful to do so:

Insulin / Non Insulin Dependant Diabetics

You will need specific advice regarding the timing of Insulin injections on long flights.

Monitoring of blood glucose levels may need to be undertaken more regularly.

You may possibly require prophylactic antibiotic cover in certain instances.

Storage of glucose monitoring equipment and Insulin advice will be required as their performance can be adversely affected by extremes in temperature.

ALWAYS Keep medications with you in hand luggage.

It may be wise to obtain a letter from the Travel clinic detailing the need for you to carry any syringes, needles and medication.

Take extra medication/monitoring equipment and a copy of your

prescription with you in case of emergency.

Wear a Medic Alert bracelet or carry a note on your person stating that you are Diabetic.

Consider contacting with the airlines regarding ordering special diet in advance of your trip.

The British Diabetic Association produce a booklet for travellers which details about Insulin, diet and menus available in certain countries together with carbohydrate content. There is also a list of phrases which may be useful for the diabetic traveller.

ADDITIONALLY.....

It may be pertinent to contact the BDA about travel insurance details....they may be cheaper!

You can contact them at website www.diabetes.org.uk

Respiratory / Heart Problems

Travelling by air with any chest or heart conditions can sometimes be a problem.

Advice regarding management of your condition, as well as understanding the effects of flying with severe chest complaints will be required.

There are instances where flying is not advisable. Some airlines may wish you to produce a certificate from your doctor for medical clearance for suitability to fly.

If taking diuretics, take your medication on the aircraft to prevent the effects occurring before travel.

Travelling at altitude can affect people with various chest problems, and it is wise to contact the airline well in advance of any special requirements that you may have, such as oxygen, or for wheelchair provision.

Keep all medication in hand luggage, to enable use as required. Particularly with inhalers as decreased humidity on the aircraft results in the circulating air being "drier" than normal.

Take sufficient medication for your trip, and in addition ask the GP for a copy prescription to take with you in case of emergency.

Speak with the Travel Clinic nurse or GP for further detailed advice.

"DID YOU KNOW ?

Air pressure within the cabin of an aircraft during flight is equivalent to being at an altitude of 6000 - 8000 ft."

Epilepsy

Well controlled epilepsy is not usually a problem for travelling by air. Although some airlines may restrict travel if a Grand Mal seizure has occurred within 24hrs prior to flying.

Ensure you have sufficient medication for your trip, additionally obtain an extra copy of your prescription - as it would be useful to have on your person should urgent treatment be required.

Be aware some anti Malarial drugs are not suitable for people with Epilepsy.

You are advised to obtain professional advice with regard to appropriate medication particularly for travel to Malaria Endemic zones.

HIV Positive Travellers

You will need to ascertain if country entry requirements need you to verify if you are HIV positive.

It is important that you are adequately vaccinated against disease. There are however certain vaccines which are not recommended in persons with HIV infection. A vaccination waiver or exemption certificate may be required in some instances.

Anti malarial cover for travel to Malaria endemic zones is essential.

Antibiotic cover may be indicated for certain types of travel.

Ensure you speak to the GP or Travel clinic nurse regarding your specific health care needs.

Asplenic Travellers

It is strongly recommended that avoiding Malaria Endemic zones is an important factor to consider when thinking about your holiday destination.

You will require additional vaccinations in order to ensure optimum levels of protection for your medical condition.

Ensure you have a medic alert bracelet as well as a splenectomy card, and carry them on your person everywhere.

It may also be pertinent to have antibiotic cover, or carry a course with you for use as and when needed.

Finally do not hesitate to contact the GP or Travel Health nurse for advice.

Disability and Travel

Although disability is not a barrier to travel, specific needs also require consideration - and airlines in particular need to be made aware of special requirements for each individual.

Airlines often require you to complete specific forms if special assistance is required.

A Frequent Travellers Medical Card (FREMEC) can be obtained via some airlines for those whose disability is stable, this avoids repetition of form filling each time you travel.

Help or information may be obtained from www.radar.org.uk or write to:

RADAR
12 City Forum
250 City Road
LONDON
EC1V 8AF
Tel: 0171 250 3222

for guidance on all aspects of disability including leisure and holiday advice.

Take sufficient medication for your trip, and in addition ask the GP for a copy prescription to take with you.

Pregnant Women or Women with Newborn Babies

Generally it is not advisable to fly with newborn babies until they are at least 7 days old.

Pregnant women also may find there are restrictions in relation to air travel, or for medical reasons as to why they should not fly. Advice must be sought from the GP in these cases.

Travel to Malaria endemic zones and countries where live vaccination is required is not advisable during pregnancy.

Use DEET based insect repellents sparingly if pregnant.

With some anti-malarial medications you will need to take a folic Acid supplement as well.

Ensure medical facilities in country you are visiting are able to cope with any emergencies with which you may present.

It is vital that your medical insurance includes cover for the possibility of having your baby whilst overseas.

If you are breast feeding be sure to mention this at the Travel consultation, as certain medications should be avoided.

Always speak with a Travel Health professional if in any doubt.

Travel with Children

Needs good preparation and planning, to prevent travel sickness, and boredom, etc.

Any child suffering with ear problems, or any infective illness should seek advice from the GP before any travel by air.

Comprehensive medical insurance is advised.

Parents of babies under 6 months of age, travelling to developing countries will need specific advice regarding health risks.

If travelling to malaria zones be aware that breast fed babies will require Anti Malarial medication too.

Be Travel Health aware and Think on Behalf of the child at all times as health and safety regulations may not be as stringent in the country you are visiting.

The Over 60's

Almost 1/4 of all travellers are over the age of 60yrs - Some of whom may have complex health needs which will need specific advice regarding their management.

Be aware that:

There are some travel related illnesses to which you may also be more susceptible. Some airlines may wish you to produce evidence of your suitability to travel, particularly on long haul flights.

Ensure the Airline is aware of any specific needs for your trip.

Take out comprehensive Holiday Insurance. This can be expensive and it may be beneficial to contact help the aged at website www.helptheaged.org.uk where specific types of Insurance cover for ages 55yrs - 80 yrs is covered.

For the 80yrs plus age group, you should telephone freephone - 0800 41 31 80 for further detailed information.

Backpacker / Gap Year Travel

More students are travelling during their Gap year than ever before, some for long term travel and many to developing countries.

It is essential that you seek appropriate health advice and immunisations well in advance of your departure, as your schedule may be quite involved and you will need a thorough risk assessment.

Specific detailed advice regarding malaria avoidance and treatment, for travellers who are backpacking and travelling in remote areas away from medical assistance may be required.

Further detailed information and advice should be sought from the Travel clinic, preferably, 4-6 months in advance of departure.