

# Travel Tips

## Essential Guidance for Patients

To navigate your journey with confidence and ease.



At Newquay Health Centre we offer a limited travel health service, providing NHS travel vaccines only, namely Tetanus/Diphtheria/Polio, Hepatitis A, Cholera, MMR and Typhoid vaccines.



Please refer to Nathnac Travelhealthpro: [NaTHNaC - Country List](#) to research your travel health needs further, obtain more healthy travel advice and information relating to your destination,, and so you can assess your risk for other diseases for which private vaccinations are required ( e.g Japanese Encephaliitis, Hepatitis B, Rabies, Yellow Fever). Depending what activities you undertake whilst abroad, areas you are visiting, and if you are travelling for more than 4 weeks means there is a higher risk of certain diseases.

You may also see whilst researching your travel health, that you need antimalaria tablets.

Some are available over the counter ( Chloroquine/Proguanil, Maloff Protect) , whilst others have to be obtained from a private travel clinic (Atorvaquone/Proguanil, Mefloquine and Doxycycline).

Private travel clinics include Boots and Masta ( [boots.ie/travel-vaccination-service](https://boots.ie/travel-vaccination-service); [Travel & Occupational Health Vaccine Clinics UK | MASTA](#) )

Please also look at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office website ( [Foreign travel advice - GOV.UK](#)) which is full of information so you will keep safe and healthy whilst travelling.



# Travelling with medication

- **Travellers who take regular medication should allow time to prepare for their trip well in advance of travel.**
- A medical check-up is recommended to discuss fitness to travel, ensure medication is optimised and sufficient supplies are available.
- **Travellers should take medication in its original pharmacy packaging, along with a copy of their prescription and letter from the prescriber. Medication should be carried in hand luggage, with some extra in the hold luggage.**
- Some countries may not allow the entry of certain types of medicines, and others may have regulations requiring specific permission for a medication to be brought in. These rules can also apply to medicines available over the counter in the UK.
- Certain medicines are 'controlled' in the UK and travellers are required to obtain an export licence prior to transporting a certain quantity (usually three months or more supply) of these drugs out of or into the country. A letter from the prescriber detailing the medicines is advised for travelling with smaller supplies.
- Travellers should be aware that the legal status of their medication may be different outside the UK. Rules for the different countries can be checked with the foreign embassy in the UK but can be difficult to obtain for some countries; other useful resources are provided below.
- Falsified (fake) drugs are more common in certain regions and can be a significant health risk. The internet also provides opportunity for the sale of products (sometimes harmful to health) with false claims on 'miracle cures' for various illnesses

# Water & Swimming Safety

## 💧 Water

Diseases can be caught from drinking contaminated water or swimming in it.

If you are unsure whether the water supply is safe, **ONLY USE** (in order of preference):

- 🔥💧 Boiled water
- 🍷💧 Bottled water or canned drinks
- 💧🧴 Water treated with a sterilising agent

This includes ice cubes 🧊 in drinks and water for brushing teeth 🪥.

## 🏊♂ Swimming

🏊✅ Safe: Swimming in well-chlorinated pools.

🏊❌ Avoid: In Africa, South America, or parts of the Caribbean, do **NOT** swim in freshwater lakes, rivers, or streams.

These can contain parasites that cause schistosomiasis (bilharzia) 🦠.

## 👣🌴 Footwear Advice

You should wear footwear at all times outdoors, including on beaches 🏖️.

Infections can be picked up from sand or soil, especially when wet 🌧️.

## 🍴🍽️ Food Safer Eating Tips

Contaminated food and drink are among the most common causes of illness abroad. Taking simple precautions can greatly reduce your risk and help you enjoy a healthy trip.

- 🍲 Eat freshly prepared, thoroughly cooked meals - Food served piping hot is less likely to contain harmful bacteria.
- 🍲 Avoid leftovers and reheated dishes - These can allow germs to multiply, especially in hot climates.
- 🍖 Ensure all meat is well cooked throughout - Avoid meat that is pink, undercooked, or bloody.
- 🥕 Choose cooked vegetables and avoid raw salads - Raw produce may be washed in contaminated water.
- 🍌 Eat fruit you can peel yourself Such as bananas, oranges, and mangos. Wash your hands before peeling.
- 🥛 Avoid unpasteurised milk or dairy products. These can carry harmful bacteria.
- 🍦 Avoid ice cream from unreliable sources. Poor storage and freezing can increase contamination risk.
- 🍤 Be cautious with seafood — especially shellfish. Shellfish easily absorbs pollutants and bacteria.
- 🚫🍷 Avoid food from street vendors - Although tempting, hygiene standards can vary widely. Choose reputable places where food is cooked fresh.

🍷 Drinks and Alcohol - ⚠️ Alcohol increases risk

Drinking too much can lead to poor decisions about food and drink safety or ignoring precautions.



# Traveller's Diarrhoea

This is the most common travel illness and there is no vaccine. It is caused by contaminated food or water and dehydration ⚠️🌡️💧. Risk varies by country and can be reduced by following food, water, and hygiene advice 🍴🚰🧼.

## 🩺 Symptoms

- 💧 Three or more loose stools in 24 hours
- 🤢 Cramps or vomiting
- Usually lasts 2–4 days

## 💊 Treatment

- 🥤 Drink plenty of fluids
- 🧂 Use oral rehydration salts
- 💊 Anti-diarrhoeal tablets may be used by adults only
- ❌ Do NOT use anti-diarrhoeals if there is fever 🤒 or blood in the stool 🩸

## 🏥 Seek medical advice if:

- 🤒 Fever or 🩸 blood in diarrhoea
- Symptoms last >48 hours (or >24 hours in children)
- ⬆️ Increasing illness or confusion

Antibiotics may be prescribed if needed.

⚠️ Diarrhoea & vomiting can reduce the effectiveness of the oral contraceptive pill—use extra precautions.

## 🌍 Risk Areas

● High risk

North Africa, sub-Saharan Africa, Indian Subcontinent, SE Asia, South America, Mexico, Middle East.

● Medium risk

Northern Mediterranean, Canary Islands, Caribbean Islands.

● Low risk

North America, Western Europe, Australia.



# Bites & Malaria



## Mosquito Bite Prevention (Malaria Areas)

- 🌙 Cover up at night: Wear loose long sleeves and long trousers from dusk to dawn.
- 🧴 Use repellent: Apply up to 50% DEET on exposed skin (sunscreen first, then repellent).
- 👕 Treat clothing: Use permethrin-treated clothes or spray clothing with repellent.
- 🏠 Protect your room: Close shutters early; use an insecticide spray if no air-con.
- 🛏 Use a mosquito net: Sleep under a permethrin-treated net when camping or in unscreened rooms.
- 💧 Avoid stagnant water: Don't camp near still water.

## ✗ Not effective

Buzzers, garlic, vitamin B, tea tree oil, herbal or homeopathic remedies do not prevent malaria.

## ⚠️ If unwell after travel


Fever, chills, sweats, headache or flu-like symptoms → seek medical help urgently.

## Animal Bites (Rabies Risk)



Rabies is present in many countries and is fatal once symptoms appear.

### ✓ What to do

-  Don't touch animals (dogs, cats, monkeys, etc.).
- If bitten, scratched or licked on broken skin, or saliva enters eyes/mouth:
  - 🧼 Wash for 10–15 minutes with soap and running water
  - 🧴 Apply antiseptic
  - 🏥 Seek medical advice immediately, even if vaccinated



# Travel Insurance

- Take adequate travel insurance, including medical repatriation (this can be extremely expensive without cover).
- Declare all medical conditions to your insurer.
- EHIC/GHIC does NOT replace insurance — you still need full cover.
- Check FCDO travel advice: [www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice](http://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice)

## Personal Safety & Security

The Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO) provides excellent safety information for travellers, including updates on:

- Travel risks
- Natural disasters
- Political unrest
- <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/foreign-commonwealth-office>

## Accident Prevention

Accidents are a major cause of death abroad.

- Avoid alcohol when swimming or driving.
- Use seat belts at all times.
- Choose trusted, reputable transport providers.

## More About Insurance

- Make sure your policy includes medical repatriation—costs can be very high without it.
- Inform your insurer of any pre-existing conditions and read the small print carefully.
- If travelling in the EU, obtain an EHIC/GHIC card before you go (it takes time to arrive):
- <http://www.nhs.uk/NHSEngland/Healthcareabroad/EHIC/Pages/Applyingandrenewing.aspx>
- Still take full travel insurance, even if you have an EHIC/GHIC.

# Sun & Heat Safety

Sunburn and heat-stroke are common when travelling and increase the long-term risk of skin cancer.

There is no such thing as a safe suntan ❌☀️.

- ☀️ Increase sun exposure gradually
- Start with short periods (e.g., 15–20 minutes) and build up slowly to avoid sudden burning.
- 🧴 Use a broad-spectrum sunscreen (UVA + UVB protection)
- SPF 15+ for adults
- SPF 25+ for young children
- Reapply often, especially after swimming, sweating, or towel-drying 🏊♂️🧴
- Always read the manufacturer's instructions
- 🧒 Keep babies under 6 months out of direct sun
- Their skin burns extremely easily — shade and clothing should be used at all times.
- 🧴➡️🦟 Apply sunscreen first, then insect repellent
- Repellent reduces SPF, so sunscreen must go on first to be effective.
- 🧢🕶️ Wear protective clothing
- Wide-brimmed hats, UV-protective sunglasses, loose long sleeves and light trousers can provide extra protection.
- 🕒 Avoid the strongest sun between 11am–3pm
- UV rays are most intense at midday — seek shade when possible 🌴.
- 🥤 Stay hydrated
- Drink plenty of water throughout the day — dehydration can occur quickly in hot climates.
- 🍺❌ Avoid alcohol in the heat as it increases dehydration risk.
- 🧒 Extra care for vulnerable groups
- Children, people with pale skin or red hair, and those with a history of skin problems burn very easily.



# Sexual Health



Before you go It's very important to think about your sexual health and plan for contraception while you are away. Take a supply of condoms with the UK kite mark or European CE stamp mark to ensure quality. You may buy condoms abroad, but you can't always be sure they are fit for the job. Also take along a supply of emergency contraception. It's available in many countries, but it may not be as easy as you think to get it.

## Safe sex

Holidays are about enjoying yourself, relaxing, getting away from it all and doing things that you would not normally do at home. Even so, whether you are on holiday, a business trip or visiting friends and relatives, the fact that you are away contributes to that "anything goes" feeling that increase your chance of risky sexual relations - even if sex was the last thing you expected to be doing while abroad. Watch alcohol and drug consumption while travelling - the more you partake, the more likely you'll be to have unprotected sex.

Remember, many people with an STI or HIV look perfectly normal - indeed, they may not even be aware that they are infected so always insist on using a condom. It's the most effective protection you can use. It only takes one episode of unprotected sex to leave you with an unwanted pregnancy, STI, HIV or hepatitis B: don't risk it.

If you think you might have unprotected sex abroad, ask your travel health adviser about vaccination to protect against hepatitis B virus. HBV is spread through sex and blood contact. It is a common infection worldwide, but especially in Asia, sub Saharan Africa, Eastern Europe and the Caribbean. It can cause a lifelong infection that destroys the liver (cirrhosis), causing liver failure. Many people don't know that they are carriers and so spread the virus unknowingly. Luckily condoms protect against it.

## HIV

HIV is predominantly transmitted through sex and is a lifelong infection, fatal if left untreated. Anyone having unprotected sex is at risk of HIV infection, but the risk increases if you have sex abroad, in particular countries in sub-Saharan Africa, Asia, Eastern Europe, and Central and South America. But no country is untouched by HIV so even if your destination is not listed here, the risk is real. HIV can also be spread among drug users through infected blood on shared needles, as well as in tattoo, piercing and acupuncture equipment. More information on HIV and sexual health is at [www.tht.org.uk](http://www.tht.org.uk).

## Sexual assault

If you are the victim of a sexual assault contact the British Embassy, High Commission or Consulate in your host country immediately. They can assist you in confidence and refer you to local specialist doctors who speak English. The Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) has recently published a leaflet you may find helpful: [Travel and living abroad; when things go wrong](http://www.fco.gov.uk/en/travel-and-living-abroad/when-things-go-wrong/rape) is at [www.fco.gov.uk/en/travel-and-living-abroad/when-things-go-wrong/rape](http://www.fco.gov.uk/en/travel-and-living-abroad/when-things-go-wrong/rape).

## Contraception



Used properly, condoms are your most effective ally for sexual health, but take care of them. Latex condoms are easily damaged by oil-based lubricants such as Vaseline, baby oil or suntan lotion. If you are travelling for a long period of time it's worth getting information from Marie Stopes International ([www.mariestopes.org.uk](http://www.mariestopes.org.uk)). They can advise on local clinics abroad that may be able to help you should you have an unwanted pregnancy or STI.

## Back home

If you've had sex while away, it's worth visiting a sexual health clinic for a confidential check-up as soon as you return (find your local clinic at [www.fpa.org.uk](http://www.fpa.org.uk)). They can test for all the STIs including HIV. Untreated STIs can lead to serious problems such as infertility, but in the early stages they can be cleared up with a course of antibiotics. Remember, some STIs don't have any symptoms at all. And, on the other hand, some symptoms don't have anything to do with an STI. If you have an itch, don't panic - just get yourself checked out.



Enjoy travelling and protect yourself: Give yourself a trip to remember for all the right reasons.



# Air Travel Tips



  Move regularly: On long-haul flights, move your legs, feet and toes often and walk around when safe to do so. This helps keep blood flowing and reduces the risk of circulation problems.

 Stay hydrated: Drink plenty of water during the flight.

  Limit alcohol: Alcohol dehydrates you and can worsen jet lag.

  DVT awareness: If you're at risk of deep vein thrombosis (DVT), consider compression stockings and read more on this via the travel-health websites listed at the end of your leaflet.



  Keep emergency contacts handy: Save important numbers on your phone and carry a written copy too.

  Stick to your medication schedule: Keep medicines in your hand luggage and maintain your usual routine, adjusting time zones gradually if needed.



# Extra Useful Travel Tips

**IMPORTANT**

-  Make copies of important documents: Passport, insurance, visas, travel tickets. Keep one copy with you and one stored securely online.
-  Bring the right adapters: Check plug types and voltage for your destination.
-  Keep hand hygiene supplies: Hand gel and wipes are helpful when soap and water aren't available.
-  Keep money in separate places: Split cash/cards between bags to reduce risk if one is lost.
-  Share your itinerary: Let family or a trusted friend know your plans and accommodation details.
-  Jet lag: Adjust your sleep pattern a few days before travel and get natural daylight on arrival.
-  Know how to access medical care: Research local emergency numbers and nearby medical facilities before you go.
-  Stay aware of safety: Follow local advice, avoid risky areas at night, and keep valuables out of sight.

# Further advice

Name/description	Web address
1. <b>Easy to access resources in one place from Jane Chiodini</b>	<a href="http://www.janechiodini.co.uk/news/help/tar">www.janechiodini.co.uk/news/help/tar</a>
2. <b>Fit for Travel</b> - Scottish NHS public travel site for general advice on all aspects of travel and country specific information, including malaria maps	<a href="http://www.fitfortravel.nhs.uk">www.fitfortravel.nhs.uk</a>
3. <b>NaTHNaC</b> - National Travel Health Network and Centre England based, with similar information to above	<a href="http://travelhealthpro.org.uk/">http://travelhealthpro.org.uk/</a>
4. <b>NHS Choices</b> - section (these are both different). Excellent general website also.	<a href="http://www.nhs.uk">www.nhs.uk</a>
5. <b>FCO</b> - Foreign & Commonwealth Office, especially useful for safety and security and specific pages for types of travellers, e.g. gap year, responsible	<a href="http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/foreign-commonwealth-office">www.gov.uk/government/organisations/foreign-commonwealth-office</a>
6. <b>Sunsmart</b> - is the Cancer research website providing information about skin cancer and sun protection advice	<a href="http://www.sunsmart.org.uk">www.sunsmart.org.uk</a>
7. <b>Travel health products</b> to take away with you these are just a small selection of many resources available. Please note the Village Medical Centre is not endorsing such items, merely providing information.	<a href="http://www.lifsystems.co.uk">www.lifsystems.co.uk</a> <a href="http://www.nomadtravel.co.uk">www.nomadtravel.co.uk</a> <a href="http://www.safariquip.co.uk">www.safariquip.co.uk</a> <a href="http://www.travelpharm.com">www.travelpharm.com</a>
8. <b>Medex</b>	<a href="http://www.medex.org.uk">www.medex.org.uk</a>
9. <b>Medic Alert</b> <sup>®</sup> - life-saving identification system for individuals with hidden medical conditions and allergies	<a href="http://www.medicalert.org.uk">www.medicalert.org.uk</a>
10. - a and outdoor recreational activities	<a href="http://www.kidstravel.doc.com">www.kidstravel.doc.com</a>
11. <b>Diabetes UK</b> information specific for those with diabetes who wish to travel	<a href="http://www.diabetes.org.uk">www.diabetes.org.uk</a>
12. <b>Global travel clinic locator</b> from the International Society of Travel Medicine	<a href="http://www.istm.org">www.istm.org</a>
13. <b>IAMAT</b> International Association for Medical Assistance to Travellers (IAMAT)	<a href="http://www.iamat.org/doctors_clinics.cfm">www.iamat.org/doctors_clinics.cfm</a>
14. <b>Google translate</b> Free online translation service	<a href="http://translate.google.com">http://translate.google.com</a>