



## Travel Services

# Guide for a Healthy Trip

## **Introduction**

This guide will help to ensure that your trip is a healthy one. Staying well is vital to having a good time. By following the guidelines in this booklet, you can avoid the ailments sometimes associated with international travel.

***Have a great trip!***

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## *Vaccinations*

If you have not already done so, set up a visit with your local public health agency's travel services or another provider at least four weeks before your trip. Most vaccines take time to become effective in your body, and some vaccines are given in a series over days or weeks.

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention specify three types of vaccinations: **routine, recommended and required**. Your travel health provider can help you assess your need for vaccinations.



- Be sure you are up to date on **routine** vaccinations, such as tetanus.
- You also should get any **recommended** vaccinations, which depend on your age, your health status, your immunization status, your destination(s) and the season you are traveling.
- Your provider will explain and counsel you on any **required** vaccinations (or proof of vaccinations) based on your destination(s).

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## *Traveler's Health Kit*

Create a traveler's health kit. This kit has two uses:

- to take care of minor problems as they occur, and
- to treat any pre-existing medical conditions.

### **Medications**

Medications to include in your traveler's health kit are:

- Medication for pain or fever (such as aspirin, acetaminophen or ibuprofen)
- Antihistamine

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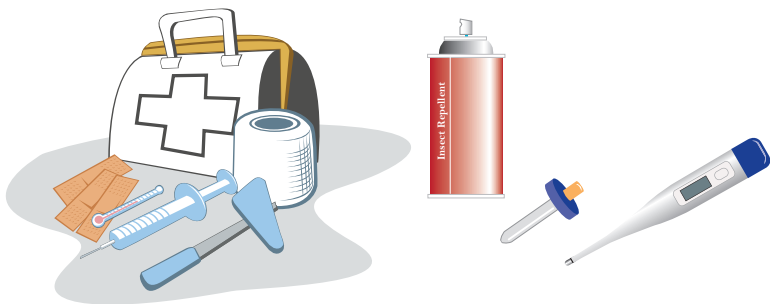
- Decongestant
- Anti-motion sickness medication
- Over-the-counter anti-diarrheal medication
- Mild laxative
- Cough suppressant/expectorant
- Throat lozenges
- Antacid
- Antibacterial ointment or cream
- 1% hydrocortisone cream
- Prescription medications in original containers, copies of prescriptions (including generic names) and a note from the prescribing physician on letterhead stationery for controlled substances and injectable medications
- Other medications your physician or nurse recommends



### Other Traveler's Health Kit Items

Other items to include in your traveler's health kit are:

- First aid items (adhesive bandages, gauze, antiseptic, scissors, ace wrap)
- Antibacterial hand wipes or alcohol-based hand sanitizer (at least 60% alcohol)
- Bandages for blisters
- Eye drops
- Insect repellent containing DEET or picaridin (up to 50%)
- Sunscreen (SPF 15 or higher)
- Aloe gel
- Digital thermometer
- Fine-tipped tweezers
- Other items your physician or nurse recommends



## Commercial Traveler's Health Kits

Commercial traveler's health kits are available. You can look online for companies that offer such kits. In addition, first aid kits are available at many sporting goods stores. If you buy a kit, be sure it contains everything you need. You might have to buy additional items.

Keep your traveler's health kit handy. A health kit is useful only if it is available when needed. Carry your kit with you at all times, including on side trips and in carry-on baggage (when allowed).

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## *Pre-existing Health Conditions*

If you have a pre-existing health condition, you should:

- Consider wearing an alert bracelet.
- Inform your travel health provider of your condition prior to receiving any vaccinations.
- Handle prescription medications as recommended on page 3.
- Carry information about your health condition and treatment in your wallet and with your travel documents.



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## *Risks from Food and Water*

Contaminated food and water are common sources of bacterial, viral and parasitic infections. Also, poor hand washing and swallowing recreational water can lead to infections.

### **Food**

To avoid illness, choose food with care. Do not assume any food is safe, including food served on commercial airlines. Eating food from street vendors is especially risky.

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When traveling, follow these guidelines:

- Avoid all raw foods, such as salads, uncooked vegetables, and unpasteurized milk and milk products (like cheese).
- Eat only food that has been cooked and served hot.
- Be sure to wash and peel fruit yourself.
- Be sure to wash your hands thoroughly or use hand gel (at least 60% alcohol) before eating and after using the restroom, changing diapers, and having contact with animals and young children.

## Water

When possible, drink water that is chlorinated according to U.S. standards. However, where adequately chlorinated tap water is not available, you should instead drink only beverages made with boiled water (like coffee and tea) and beverages sold in cans and bottles. Before drinking a beverage directly from a can or bottle, be sure to wipe the surfaces that your mouth will touch. Do not use unchlorinated water to make ice or to brush your teeth.



You can make water safe for drinking by boiling it, running it through a filter or disinfecting it with chemicals. For instructions, visit <https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/yellowbook> and to go Chapter 2: The Pretravel Consultation, Water Disinfection for Travelers.

Recreational water (in lakes, rivers, oceans and swimming pools) can also cause illness. Swim with no open cuts or scrapes in your skin and with your mouth closed. Do not swim in areas that might be contaminated with human sewage, animal feces or wastewater runoff. Do not swim after a heavy rainfall.

## Traveler's Diarrhea

Traveler's diarrhea can occur during or shortly after a trip.

Following the guidelines for food and water will lower your risk for diarrhea. The chance of having diarrhea also depends, in part, on where you travel. The risk is higher in some parts of the world than in others.



If you develop diarrhea, follow the instructions on the anti-diarrheal



medication in your travel health kit. Seek medical attention if you have a high fever or are passing blood. You might also want to contact a health care provider for a prescription medication. Be sure to drink plenty of fluids to replace fluid that is lost.

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## *Protection from Mosquitoes and Ticks*

To lower the chance of being bitten by a mosquito, tick or other disease-carrying insect, you should:

- Use an insect repellent (containing DEET or picaridin) according to package directions. Reapply as directed and wash off at bedtime.
- Apply sunscreen first, then repellent. Don't apply the repellent before the sunscreen.
- Use mosquito nets.
- Treat clothing, shoes, tents, mosquito nets and other gear with repellents that contain DEET, picaridin or permethrin.
- Wear light colored, long sleeved shirts and long pants, as well as hats and closed shoes.

Inspect your body and clothes for ticks during and at the end of each day. If you find a tick on your skin, use fine-tipped tweezers to grasp it very close to the skin and pull straight up. Wash area with soap and water. Crush ticks found on skin or clothing and drop them in the trash.



*Travel Services are available at:*

**East DeKalb Health Center**

2277 S. Stone Mountain-Lithonia Road  
Lithonia, GA 30058  
**(770) 484-2600**

**North DeKalb Health Center**

3807 Clairmont Road, NE  
Chamblee, GA 30341  
**(770) 454-1144**

**T. O. Vinson Health Center**

440 Winn Way  
Decatur, GA 30030  
**(404) 294-3762**

*For more information, please contact:*



445 Winn Way  
Decatur, GA 30030  
(404) 294-3700

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