

Advice for overseas travellers

1) Prior to Travel

Vaccinations

- It is important that you make an appointment to have your vaccinations at least 6 weeks prior to your intended travel. This is so that any immunisations which may be required have time to achieve sufficient immunity against diseases such as typhoid, hepatitis, polio and tetanus can be achieved.

Medical aid

- Ensure that you are familiar with your Company's procedures in the event of you falling ill or having an accident whilst you are abroad.
- Ensure that contact telephone numbers are available prior to your travel.

Travel pack

- It is sensible to carry a first aid travel pack whilst you are abroad. It is particularly important when visiting third world countries. The pack will usually contain sterile dressings, antiseptic analgesia, treatment for diarrhoea and other basic first aid requirements.
- Some travel packs may contain hypodermic needles and syringes if the risk assessment has identified this to be necessary.
- Such travel packs should contain a letter of authorisation, to prevent confiscation or difficulties at customs.

Dental check

- Prior to travel, you should see their dentist for a dental health check and any treatment that is necessary should take place before the date of travel if at all possible.

Medication

- If you take regular medication, ensure that you have an adequate supply to last you for the duration of your visit.

2) Long haul travel

Long haul business travel can effect you in the following ways;

Sleep disturbance / jet lag

- Disturbance of sleep patterns, owing to disruption of the body's circadian rhythm, may affect concentration and decrease performance levels.
- Avoid attending important meetings as soon as you arrive at your destination as your concentration may be affected.
- If you have crossed several time zones and intend to stay for more than a few days, try to adjust to the local time by eating according to the new time and go to bed at local time.
- Include stopovers in your travel plan if possible.
- Non addictive night sedation is available from your General Practitioner if you have identified sleep disturbance problems with previous travel. Ensure that you take the correct dose.

Road Safety

- Business travellers are advised to avoid driving for the first 24 hours following long haul travel in order to reduce the incidence of car accidents attributable to poor concentration and driver error.
- Ensure that alternative travel arrangements such as taxis are made once you arrive at your flight destination.

Dehydration

- Another affect on the body of long haul travel is dehydration, both due to the cabin pressure within an aircraft and circadian rhythm disruption.
- Drink plentiful quantities of bottled water during the flight and avoid alcohol to reduce the effects of dehydration.
- If your destination enjoys a hot climate, ensure that you drink plenty of water to avoid dehydration.
- Use extra salt on food if necessary.

Deep Vein thrombosis

- There is a risk of developing deep vein thrombosis during or following long haul flights.
- You are particularly at risk if you have a history of varicose veins or smoke.
- It is important to do regular leg exercises during long haul flights and on arrival at your destination.



3) When you arrive

Climate change

- Working in a different climate can affect your feeling of well being.
- Ensure that you take appropriate clothing for the climate. If the climate is hot, light coloured, loose clothing is recommended.
- Wear long sleeves and long trouser (or skirts) to protect your skin from sun damage.
- Broad brimmed hats will protect your face and neck.
- Use sun block on exposed parts of the body.
- At dusk, ensure that you are well covered to avoid insect bites.

Insect bites

- Insect bites abroad can transmit disease.
- Use insect repellent on exposed skin and insecticides in the bedroom at night.
- Keep windows closed if possible.
- Use an antihistamine cream on bites to reduce irritation and swelling.

Water

- If visiting third world countries avoid contact with unpurified water, including salads, uncooked/reheated food, and ice in drinks.
- Teeth cleaning from taps can also pose a risk.

Diet

- Never assume that food is safe to eat unless it is fresh and thoroughly cooked.
- Avoid eating raw shellfish.
- Only eat fruit which has been peeled by you.

AIDS

- Be aware of infections transferred via sexual contact, or through recreational drugs. In Africa, the risk of acquiring HIV infection via sexual contact or hypodermic needles poses a high risk to health.
- Practice safe sex.

Animals

- Avoid close contact with animals since they can carry rabies, which can be fatal.
- If you sustain an animal bite, clean it well with antiseptic and seek medical advice.



Psychological effects

- If you intend to be away from home for a long period, isolation from family and friends can occur.
- Ensure that you have easy contact with your family
- If you will be working abroad for long periods it may be necessary your family to be relocated.
- Should you experience depression or anxiety, ensure that you contact your manager or local contact to arrange for counselling or repatriation if necessary.

Safety and security

- Your Company should have carried out a risk assessment for the area you intend to visit. Travel health agencies such as MASTA and Travex can provide an up to date report on any political unrest. supply not only information on health issues relating to travel, but on the current political climate, areas of countries to be avoided, current weather forecasts and other information intended to reduce the risk of overseas travel.
- Avoid taking valuable possessions on your trip if possible.
- Ensure that money is kept in a safe place to avoid theft.

Post travel

- If you experiences any unknown fever, malaise, rash or other unusual symptoms once you return from your travel, contact your General Practitioner immediately, informing him of the countries that you have visited.

