



Travel Clinic and 10 Travel Checklist: One Health Medical Center Pretoria CBD 0123224541

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Corresponding Author:

Dr. Felix I Woke MD, Ph.D,
Extra-ordinary Lecturer, Family Physician & Epidemiologist, University Pretoria, School of Health Systems and Public Health , 371 Thabo Sehume street, Pretoria, 0002 - South Africa

Submitting Author:

Dr. Felix I Woke MD, Ph.D,
Extra-ordinary Lecturer, Family Physician & Epidemiologist, University Pretoria, School of Health Systems and Public Health , 371 Thabo Sehume street, Pretoria, 0002 - South Africa

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Author(s): Woke MD, Ph.D FI

My opinion

Introduction: International travel can be exciting, but can also pose health challenges peculiar to an individual or country. Travel consultation is advisable before setting off to a new city or country. The Health steps you take begin from the time you embark on the mode of travel to your last day in your travel destination and continue after return home. Conditions in the country you travel to including climatic condition, common diseases, food available and activities during travel are important determinant of health care you would need. Hiking, horse riding, marathons and swimming all require different precautions. The following health advice applies to most travelers.

Discussion: 10 Travel Check-list

Water: Brush teeth and drink only boiled/bottled water. Avoid ice made from un-boiled tap water. Drink only sealed carbonated beverages, beer, and wine.

Food: Reduce the risk of infection by avoiding fruit not Peeled by you. Avoid raw vegetables, unpasteurized ("raw") dairy products, raw meat, fish, shellfish and other unfamiliar food.

Communicable Diseases: In certain areas of the world, insects (mosquitoes, flies, fleas, bugs, and lice) and arthropods (ticks and mites) can transmit potentially serious diseases like yellow fever and malaria. Avoid bites by using insect repellants, treated mosquito nets, long sleeve shirts and trousers. Reduce time spent outdoors, stay in the last floor of your hotels, and check skin regularly for insect bites. Don't walk bare-footed; avoid stagnant waters, dogs, cats and pets. Practice safe sex always (HIV and other STIs).

Vaccines & Prophylaxis: Some countries have specific diseases that may require vaccination (e.g. Yellow Fever, Typhoid, Meningitis, and Cholera, Hepatitis A) and prophylaxis (e.g malaria). Most common travel diseases have vaccines available in SA. Please consult and enquire about all the compulsory and recommended vaccines for your destination. A stitch in time saves nine.

Medical Aid & Insurance: Medical Aid may or may not provide cover at your destination- please consult your Medical Aid if you are unsure. You may opt for

travel insurance- they are available.

Emergency Medications: Take some emergency medications along during travel for example you may choose to take medications for diarrhea, pain, allergy and vomiting. Identify the closest health facility on arrival at your destination and write down emergency numbers for the country including police, fire and ambulance services.

Chronic Health Problems: Discuss your chronic health problems with your doctor before travel. Extra medication or treatment adjustment may be needed. Carry your medications in a hand luggage for access and safety. Persons with chronic diseases may require adjustments in treatment and eating habits (e.g. Diabetes), and may be susceptible to new health problems and complications during travel.

Medical Problems associated with Air, Water and Road Travel: Your mode of transport may be associated with peculiar health problems. Air travel related problems include jet lag, motion sickness, ear and sinus barotraumas, leg clots and problems of low oxygen pressure (lung disease and heart attacks). Consult the hostess immediately if you feel sick during a flight. During road travel and on arrival, all road safety measures must be taken to avoid accidents. Avoid or take care with outdoor activities with risk of accident during your travel.

During Travel: Sit comfortably, loosen tight clothing and take a walk/stretch every 2hrs of flight.

The Returned Traveler: A returned traveler with a flu-like illness, fever, diarrhea and headache must consult immediately. Note that travel diseases may manifest acutely in hours like the case of Barotrauma, Jetlag and Pulmonary embolism. They can present sub-acutely in days like Malaria, Lyme disease, Babesiosis, hemorrhagic fever, diarrhea diseases. It can also take months or years to manifest like schistosomiasis and Falciparum Malaria.

Conclusion: While travelling is a good exercise for families, partners and even friends, however, it is pertinent that all must return in good health. Travel health starts with anticipation and planning for the possible condition at the travel destination, and such planning can only be possible with a clear understanding of the possible health needs of the traveller, epidemiology of common diseases and

health peculiarities of the destination of choice; this is the services One Health Medical Center offers to all travellers.