

When travelling abroad, avoid raw shellfish, food from street vendors

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more information on particular threats or precautions for that area. If you are travelling to the developing world, contact the International Association for Medical Assistance to Travellers for an up-to-date directory of health institutions and English-speaking doctors worldwide.

While you're away

✓ Diarrhea is the most common illness inflicted on travellers by microbes.

Drink only purified or bottled water with the seal intact. Ice should also be made from purified water. Purification eliminates any bacteria or parasites that may be present in the local water supply.

✓ Carry an antibiotic and lmodium for self-treatment of traveller's diarrhea.

✓ Food spoils rapidly in a tropical climate.

Ensure that all food is well-cooked and eaten while it is still hot.

Only eat fruits and vegetables which you have peeled and washed yourself. Avoid unpasteurized dairy products, raw shellfish and food from street vendors.

✓ Malarial-carrying mosquitoes bite between dusk and dawn. Protect yourself from these and other irritating bug bites by using an effective insect repellent. Wear light weight, long-sleeved shirts and trousers after dusk. Wear proper footwear to avoid bites from snakes, and sandfleas, ticks and parasites that are found in the sand and soil.

✓ Avoid swimming or wading in slow-moving, freshwater lakes and rivers where parasites may penetrate the skin.

✓ In countries where rules of the road are not enforced or are non-existent, vacationers should avoid travelling in over-crowded public vehicles, by rural roads after dark and on motorcycles.

✓ Respect the sun. Intense exposure can cause sunburn, dehydration, premature aging and even skin cancer.

Start slowly, and gradually increase your sunbathing each day. Use a sunscreen with a minimum protection of SPF 15 and re-apply it regularly, especially after swimming.

When you return

✓ Consult your physician if you have health problems such as fever or persistent diarrhea (more than ten days). If you develop flu-like symptoms within one year of returning home and have travelled to a known malarial area, request a blood test to screen for that disease.

Tropical Travellers Checklist

- ✓ Prescriptions
- ✓ Vaccinations
- ✓ Sunscreen
- ✓ Health Insurance
- ✓ Emergency numbers
- ✓ Additional prescription eyeglasses, sunglasses
- ✓ First-aid kit
- ✓ Anti-diarrheal medication

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