

Travel Health Update Summer 2018

Welcome to the first of the Green Practice's Travel Health Updates. In this edition we highlight:

- Travel Insurance and EHIC cards
- Volunteering / Gap Year Travel
- Travelling to the World Cup
- Travelling to Hajj
- Are vaccines still free of charge
- Prevent Measles
- Tick Disease
- Is Zika still a threat

Travel Insurance and EHIC cards

Are you planning a holiday outside the UK this summer? Remember to check your travel insurance covers you for any activities undertaken. This should include activities such as, "swimming with dolphins" and any sort of water sports. The European Health Insurance Card (EHIC) is still available free of charge from <https://www.gov.uk/european-health-insurance-card> and is recommended if you are travelling within the EU (Spain, Portugal, France, Italy, Greece etc) HOWEVER separate travel insurance is ALWAYS recommended in addition to the EHIC. Further information is available at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/foreign-travel-insurance>

Planning to volunteer abroad or travel on a Gap Year? Check out the information available at https://www.gov.uk/guidance/gap-year-foreign-travel-advice?utm_source=bfc9e514-fcf5-445c-88bc-8a6f2c7a5e1b&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_content=daily Please remember to check your travel insurance covers you for any paid work or volunteering you may want to undertake whilst abroad.

Travelling to the World Cup?

Latest information about travelling to the World Cup in the Russian Federation is available at <http://www.fitfortravel.nhs.uk/news/newsdetail.aspx?id=22685> and <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/be-on-the-ball-world-cup-2018>

Travelling to Hajj?

The 2018 guidance for this year's Hajj in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has recently been published <http://www.fitfortravel.nhs.uk/news/newsdetail.aspx?id=22665> If you are intending to travel to Hajj this year please arrange an appointment with the Practice's Travel Health Specialist Nurse, Sister Umeed, as soon as possible. The practice is able to provide a full range of immunisations, including the meningitis vaccine required for visa purposes, however we do require a little time to arrange this, and last minute appointments are difficult to accommodate.

Are vaccines still free of charge?

The practice continues to provide an NHS service for everyone registered with the Green Practice, however vaccine recommendations changed last year and some vaccines previously provided routinely are NO LONGER recommended. Please check with, "Fit for Travel", when you book your travel to see if you require any vaccines. <http://www.fitfortravel.nhs.uk/home>

Tetanus, Diphtheria, Polio, Measles, Mumps & Rubella (MMR), Typhoid, Hepatitis A and B and Cholera vaccines are still free of charge. Vaccines to protect against Yellow Fever, Rabies, Japanese Encephalitis, Tick-Borne Encephalitis and Meningitis are not available on the NHS and ALL travellers will be required to pay for these. If you think you may require any vaccines please arrange an appointment to discuss with Sister Umeed. A Yellow Fever vaccine + Certificate is currently £50 and a 3 dose course of Rabies vaccine costs approx £150.

Preventing Measles

Unfortunately, measles is still a risk around the world. The disease is very infectious and is spread when those infected with the virus, sneeze – similar to influenza. An increasing number of countries around the world are reporting high numbers of cases of measles. This is important because there can be complications from a measles infection, such as deafness, meningitis and encephalitis.

<http://www.fitfortravel.nhs.uk/news/newsdetail.aspx?id=22671>

Advice for Travellers

It should be confirmed that all children have received their recommended doses of MMR at 12-13 months of age and again pre-school around 3 years 4 months. Consider vaccinating **all** unimmunised adults who have not had the disease themselves, particularly if they are going to be at higher risk. Two doses of MMR vaccine, at least one month apart, are required to give adequate protection. If you are unsure whether you and your family have had MMR vaccines, please arrange an appointment to discuss this with a Practice Nurse.

The practice would encourage all travellers, travelling outside the UK, to ensure they have had two doses of MMR, BEFORE they travel this summer.

Tick Disease(s)

Tularaemia and Lyme Disease

Tularaemia and Lyme Disease are two illnesses, both caused by a bacteria, which can cause a long-lasting systemic illness that initially has flu-like symptoms. They are widespread in the **northern hemisphere** and can be transmitted by **ticks**.

Ticks are more common from April to October.

At risk travellers are advised to:

- take precautions against tick bites including the use of insect repellents containing DEET (minimum 20%) on the skin and insecticide impregnated clothes covering the skin as much as possible (long sleeves and long trousers tucked into socks);
- the skin should be inspected daily for ticks, ticks may brush onto clothing but keep crawling for hours to find suitable skin to feed on, particularly in the groin, underarms and behind the knees;
- any ticks seen should be removed as quickly as possible by grasping the tick as near to the skin surface as possible and applying gentle traction (**without twisting**);
- if a sore or rash develops at the site of a tick bite, medical advice should be sought.
- Other prevention measures include:
 - do not drinking untreated surface water;
 - do not handle dead wild animals, particularly rabbits, hares and rodents. If this is unavoidable eg for work purposes, use gloves;
 - thoroughly cook all meat before eating.

Further information, and to find out if you are at risk of either Tularaemia or Lyme Disease, please see <http://www.fitfortravel.nhs.uk/advice/general-travel-health-advice/insect-bite-avoidance#ticks>

Lyme Disease is a problem in certain areas of Scotland and the UK. Further information available from <http://lymediseaseuk.com/>

Tick-Borne Encephalitis, is a VIRAL illness spread by ticks in the Northern Hemisphere.

<https://www.tickalert.org/am-i-risk-tbe> This is a potentially life-threatening infection, causing meningitis and encephalitis, BUT is vaccine preventable. If you think you or your family are at risk from Tick-Borne Encephalitis (typically from hill walking and / or camping in parts of Europe) please arrange to discuss the vaccine with Sister Umeed. This is a non NHS vaccine which the traveller has to pay for.

<http://www.fitfortravel.nhs.uk/advice/disease-prevention-advice/tick-borne-encephalitis>

Is Zika still a threat?

Unfortunately, Zika Virus continues to be a threat in many areas of the Tropics, **including many honeymoon destinations**. The virus is spread by the bite of an infected mosquito and there is no vaccine available.

<http://www.fitfortravel.nhs.uk/advice/disease-prevention-advice/zika-virus-infection>

Advice for Travellers

- Check if your planned destination is a Zika risk area <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/zika-virus-country-specific-risk#atoz>
- **Pregnant** travellers should **avoid** travelling to a moderate or high risk area https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/634375/Zika_health_advice_for_women_returning_from_travel.pdf
- Non pregnant travellers (both men and women) travelling to a moderate or high risk area should use condoms for the duration of travel AND
- For 8 weeks after travel (for women)
- For **6 months** after travel (for men)
- Avoid insect bites: cover up, use insect repellent containing minimum 50% DEET, consider repellent on clothing etc. <http://www.fitfortravel.nhs.uk/advice/general-travel-health-advice/mosquito-bite-avoidance.aspx>
- REMEMBER Zika carrying mosquitoes **bite during the day**, use insect repellent on top of sunscreen and reapply frequently. Insect repellent applied on top of sunscreen will lower the SPF factor, so consider increasing the Sun Protection from your normal strength
- Report any illness **after travel** to your GP or Practice Nurse

Safe travelling! If you would like to discuss any aspect of your future travel plans, please arrange an appointment with Sister Umeed via reception on 0141 531 8460. Please note that unfortunately, Sister Umeed is **not able** to discuss travel advice over the telephone.

Many thanks.