

Travelling Healthy Tips

Any food which is fully cooked and served hot is generally safe to eat. Cold dishes and salads represent higher risks; only eat them from trustworthy restaurants. Raw fruits and vegetables are safe if you peel them yourself.

Dukoral ® vaccine helps prevent traveller's diarrhoea. Bismuth subsalicylate (Pepto Bismol®) is safe and effective to treat attacks of diarrhoea (2 tablets every 30 minutes X 8 doses; stop if you get ringing in the ears). Anti-motility agents (Imodium, Lomotil, loperamide) and antibiotics carry some risk of serious complications.

Coffee, tea, beer, wine and bottled or canned drinks are usually safe. Boiled water and carbonated bottled water (with seal intact) are safer choices for water. Good water filtering systems are also fine.

Sunscreens are essential for most Caucasians. The sunscreen should be applied at least 30 minutes before sun exposure and reapplied frequently. An SPF of 30 is appropriate. For best protection, “**slip, slap, slop**” (slip on a shirt, slap on a hat, slop on the sunscreen)!

Many diseases are transmitted by insects. Protective clothing, bed nets or screened quarters and a good repellent (e.g. DEET) lessen the number of bites (and mosquito-borne diseases) substantially. Repellent should be applied at least 30 minutes after sunscreen, not before if using both.

Always wear shoes (or sandals at least) on tropical beaches. This can protect you from hookworms and from stepping on discarded needles.

Remember, safe sex saves lives! Discretion and protection are important!