

When traveling overseas, especially if you are going to a developing country, plan well in advance of your anticipated departure to be sure you have time to obtain immunizations, and to compile a medical kit. As your primary care providers at SHCS, we can provide you with some of the things you may need, and we can assist you in obtaining those things we don't provide. Read on for specifics.

VACCINES AND MEDICATION

There is a wide variety of travel destinations and the ever-changing health care requirements for each of them. To better prevent illness when traveling we recommend you:

1. **Get Informed:**

- Schedule a **Travel Consult** at SHCS. Call (415) 476-1281.
- Visit www.internationalsos.com for information about your travel benefits as well as country-specific information and links to other resources.
- **Consult the travel section of the CDC website** for location-specific information regarding required vaccinations, need for malaria prophylaxis, advice for disabled travelers, for pregnant travelers and general info: www.cdc.gov/travel.
- Consult the World Health Organization: <http://www.who.int/ith>.
- The US State Department contains information for Americans traveling abroad: http://travel.state.gov/travel/tips/health/health_1185.html. This website has a list of companies that provide air evacuation and has information about contacting American Consulates and Embassies and local medical facilities and physicians. It also has travel warnings and links to companies that sell insurance.

2. **Plan ahead!** Preparation takes time. Schedule your travel consult 4 to 6 weeks before your departure and further ahead if you have a complicated medical history or an exotic travel itinerary. Make sure to obtain your immunization records and bring them to your travel appointment.

All travel vaccines are available at SHCS. Hepatitis A vaccine, Hepatitis B vaccine, MMR, Varicella, and Tetanus are free at SHCS. Other vaccines must be paid by the student.

Vaccines may also be obtained, recommended and/or required may be obtained at San Francisco Dept of Public Health Adult Immunization and Travel Clinic (AITC), 101 Grove St. Room 102 (415) 554-2625 between 9am and 4pm M-Fri. Call to check vaccine availability. Student Health prices are below department of public health prices. Visit their website for pricing information: <http://sfcdcp.org/aitc.cfm>.

3. **Traveler's Antibiotics:** Students traveling for less than 2 weeks duration may be given a prescription for antibiotics to be used for traveler's diarrhea with guidelines for appropriate use. Students traveling for an extended duration may be given a longer course of antibiotics. Prescriptions are covered under the Student Insurance Plan.
4. **Malaria chemoprophylaxis:** Students can get a prescription at SHCS and bring it to an Express Scripts pharmacy to receive coverage through their prescription plan.
5. **Altitude sickness:** Acute mountain sickness is common and is correlated to altitude and rate of ascent. While definitive treatment is descent, SHCS will provide prescriptions for acetazolamide which may help prevent some of the more common initial symptoms. Acetazolamide is a sulfa drug and potentially should not be given to patients with known sulfa allergies. Commonly reported side effects are parasthesias

(tingling sensations) and frequent urination. It may also adversely affect the taste of carbonated beverages.

6. **HIV prophylaxis:** Students who will be caring for patients at risk for bloodborne pathogens during their travel abroad need to have an appointment with Ellie Lannen, RNP at the Parnassus Needlestick Hotline (719-3898 pager/476-9267 office), in order to receive HIV prophylactic medications (to be taken in the event of a needlestick or other high risk exposure.) Arrangements can be made through at Student Health.
7. **Tuberculosis Screening:** Students traveling to countries where TB is prevalent are expected to obtain a pre-travel PPD, and at 12 weeks a post-travel repeat PPD at SHCS. Consider bringing your N-95 respirator mask if working in high-risk clinical environments.

INSURANCE – INTERNATIONAL SOS TRAVEL INSURANCE

The Student Insurance Plan provides travel benefits through **International SOS** for all enrollees or registered students who have paid premiums in Fall, Winter and Spring quarters. International SOS provides short-term insurance coverage up to 12 months with 24-hour telephone access to health providers, assistance with emergency care and evacuation if needed, on-line access to services and country-specific health advisories, among other benefits. For details about coverage as well as online health and safety information, go to <http://www.internationalsos.com> and enter your **Members' Log-in: 11BSGM000060**.

The Student Insurance Plan will also **reimburse** you for approved medical expenses abroad. **Save all of your receipts for any medical expenses incurred.** You will need these as proof of payment. Deductibles, co-pays, and policy exclusions apply as described in the Student Insurance Plan brochure. For plan details, you can download a copy of the insurance brochure at <http://shs.ucsf.edu/download/insure%2007-08.pdf>.

The insurance is terminated, however, whenever a student officially withdraws. Therefore, any student who is taking time off from being a registered student in order to travel needs to make arrangements to have insurance coverage from the date of withdrawal until they return as a student. Failure to arrange coverage, combined with an illness or injury requiring medical attention, could result in a "pre-existing condition" situation that would preclude insurance coverage for up to 6 months after re-enrollment. Also, considerable out-of-pocket expenses could occur, so make sure you have other insurance coverage while you are traveling. Your interim insurance should include evacuation/ repatriation coverage.

For insurance options and plans, please visit <http://ehealthinsurance.com/>. If you think your insurance may be affected by a pre-existing condition restriction, check out www.travelguard.com which offers a travel policy that covers pre-existing conditions.

FINDING MEDICAL ASSISTANCE ABROAD

Your first call should always be to International SOS who provides 24-hour clinical and security-related advice. International SOS also provides names, addresses, telephone numbers and, if requested, office hours for physicians, hospitals, clinics, dentists and dental clinics within the area where you are located. International SOS will also help with the arrangement and confirmation of appointments with a provider. You can access this information by visiting www.internationalsos.com/world-network and entering your **Members' Log-in: 11BSGM000060** or by calling one of the alarm centers listed below.

SOS 24-Alarm Centers (dial these numbers if calling from the following areas):

- U.S.A., 1-800-523-6586 • Canada, Mexico, Central or South America, 1-215-943-8226
- Europe, Africa, Middle East, 44-20-8762-8008 • Asia, Australia, Pacific Rim, 65-6338-7800

The **International Association for Medical Assistance to Travelers** (<http://www.iamat.org/>) can also provide a list of English speaking MDs worldwide with “respected qualifications”, along with discounted fees for services. Enrollment is free (donation requested). Other sources would be the US Embassy, or the “best” hotel in town” – even if you aren’t staying there.

It is always best to do this research in advance of travel so that, in the event of an emergency, you already know where to go. This is especially true in rural developing countries where internet access may be non-existent and/or English-speaking individuals may be difficult to find.

RULES FOR HEALTHY TRAVEL

1. Wash your hands!

- Wash your hands in hot soapy water.
- Use alcohol hand sanitizer liberally and often.

2. Water Precautions

- Domestic water, in all possible guises, should be avoided unless it is known to be purified or the traveler has purified it. Water can be purified by boiling (rolling boil for 1 minute, longer at high altitude), using iodine tablets (potable aqua) or water purifiers (NOT WATER FILTERS!!).
- Bottled water should be consumed, and used for teeth brushing, whenever possible. Make sure the seal on the bottle has not been broken prior to paying for it. Otherwise, you are buying tap water. Also, make sure the top is clean before you drink from it.
- DO NOT USE ICE (or ice cream- freezers are inconsistent) even on the plane ride home.

3. Food Precautions

- Follow the adage, “boil it, cook it, peel it, or forget it” in developing countries.
- Another mnemonic is the “4 P’s: **P**ackaged, **P**urified, **P**iping hot, and **P**eelable”.
- Food served should be thoroughly cooked in order to be safe.
- Only eat fruits and vegetables that can be peeled.
- DO NOT EAT LETTUCE!
- Avoid under-cooked fish, shellfish, raw oysters and ceviche.
- Be cautious with street vendor food and avoid food covered with flies, etc.

4. Insect Bite Avoidance

- Insect avoidance can prevent infections with malaria, Japanese encephalitis, Yellow Fever, and Dengue Fever among others. The best protection is to avoid being bitten, and to take your anti-malarials if they are indicated.
- Limit outdoor activities during highest risk times of dusk to dawn. If possible, stay in air-conditioned or well-screened areas.
- Apply DEET repellent on exposed skin – a concentration of 35% is effective. It should be reapplied often unless it’s an extended relief formula. Wash hands after application. DEET needs to be worn **24 hours**.
- Treat clothing with Permethrin (Duranon) before departure and re-treat if necessary for extended trips. Permethrin is an insecticide that kills insects and stays on materials for about 8 to 10 washes.
- Sleep with a bed net, preferably one that has been treated with Permethrin, unless you are sleeping in an air-conditioned room with screened windows.

5. Animal Bite Avoidance

- Reduce your chances of getting rabies and other infections by avoiding contact with all animals, including stray or wild dogs which account for the highest incidence of rabies outside the US. If bitten by any animal, rinse profusely with soap and water for 15 minutes and call SOS to seek immediate attention (within 24 hours). You must immediately acquire the immune globulin and 5 doses of

the vaccine to avoid getting Rabies after a bite. If Rabies is indicated, it is fatal.

- Reduce the chance of being bitten or stung by snakes, scorpions, or spiders by wearing shoes with socks, shaking out foot gear immediately before putting it on, and covering headgear that is not being worn. Reduce your chances of being stung by wearing shoes with socks, shaking out foot gear immediately before putting it on, and covering headgear that is not being worn.
- Avoid live birds and poultry markets to minimize the risk of exposure to Avian Influenza.
- Never walk outdoors barefoot or reach for anything without looking first.
- Avoid dogs, monkeys, bats and other wild animals.

6. Motor Vehicle Accidents

- Motor vehicle accidents are the number one cause of death in travelers under the age of 65.
- Drunk driving is more common than you think.
- Use seat-belts if you can find them.
- Avoid motorbikes. If you choose to bicycle, wear a helmet.

7. Drugs and Alcohol

- Don't drive, dive, swim, boat, or even stroll in public places under the influence of drugs or alcohol.
- Drug possession in some countries can result in very serious punishment (long prison terms, death penalty, etc.) so don't do it! If you drink alcohol, do so in moderation and never to the point to inebriation.

8. Minimize Jet Lag

- Stay well hydrated, avoid alcohol and caffeine on the flight. Upon landing, try to adjust to new eating times rapidly and expose yourself to bright daylight for several hours. Melatonin may be helpful as a sleep aid.

9. Plan for High Altitude

- Acute Mountain Sickness (AMS) is a syndrome of headache, insomnia, shortness of breath, poor appetite, and fatigue provoked by rapid ascent to higher altitudes. It can occur at altitudes of 7000 feet but typically doesn't occur below 9000 feet. If left untreated, High Altitude Pulmonary Edema and Cerebral Edema (at high altitude) may develop. The best way to prevent AMS is to ascend no more than 1000 feet in one day and limit strenuous exertion.
- Acetazolamide (Diamox) can be used to prevent and AMS. You can get a prescription from SHCS.
- Stay well hydrated!

10. Swimming Precautions

- Do not swim in fresh water.
- Don't dive off of cliffs.
- Don't swim under the influence of drugs or alcohol.
- Check the depth of pools before diving.

11. Scuba Diving

- Allow at least 24 hours after your last dive, more if you have had multiple dives in one day.
- Be aware of the creatures that can bite, abrade, or sting. Many marine venoms are inactivated by hot water, but be careful not to burn your skin in the process.
- Use reputable dive outfitters. Be sure to check references.

12. Sun Protection

- Wear a hat, sunglasses, long-sleeves and pants, and apply sunscreen (SPF 30) liberally and frequently.
- Be aware that some medicines may increase sun-sensitivity.

- Be aware that insect repellance reduces the ineffectiveness.

13. ALWAYS Wear Shoes

14. Avoid Sexually Transmitted Infections

- Bring and USE Condoms!!! Bring them if you are a man or a woman.
- Avoid sex with sex workers!
- Bring Plan B in case you are in a situation that leads to unprotected sex.

MEDICAL KIT

15. Medical Kit: Bring a well-stocked medical kit. Remember to place all medicines you need regularly in your carry-on baggage. **Always bring a thermometer.** For most trips, a basic kit should include:

<u>MEDICATIONS</u>	<u>SUPPLIES</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tylenol or ibuprofen • Bismuth Subsalicylate • Decongestant • Diphenhydramine • Loperamide • Antidiarrheal Antibiotic (see above) • Anti-malarial (if indicated) • Recipe for rehydration (see formula below under traveler's diarrhea) • Acetazolamide for AMS (if indicated) • Hydrocortisone 1% cream • Antifungal cream • Antibiotic Ointment • List of Rx meds (and note from health provider on letter-head documenting need for specific generic-named medications) • Prescription meds- in carry-on luggage with back-ups in suitcase • Avoid purchasing drugs such as antibiotics, prednisone, etc over the counter in developing countries. Many are not up to US standards, and may be counterfeit and/or potentially harmful. Host countries may prohibit mailing of drugs, and some drugs may be considered illegal. Check with the host-country government office in US before departure. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Condoms • Thermometer • Batteries • Waterproof matches • Chapstick with sunscreen • 3" ace wrap • Sunscreen • Needle and Thread • Water purification tabs and pump • Oral Rehydration ingredients (see Traveller's Diarrhea section) • Duct tape • Baby wipes and alcohol gel to clean hands • Safety pins • Wound care: Band-aids, Gauze, Tape, steristrips, cyanoacrylic "liquid bandage" (Superglue) • Photocopies of travel documents, vaccination records, health provider letters, eyeglasses rx, etc. • Army knife with tweezers and scissors (not in carry-on luggage!) • Flashlight • Examination Gloves • N95 masks if you will be working • with TB patients • HIV Prophylaxis kit if indicated

TRAVELER'S DIARRHEA

Traveler's diarrhea is the most common health problem to affect travelers. Approximately 80% is bacterial, typically acquired from contaminated food or water. Prevention is key (see food and water precautions). Taking prophylactic bismuth subsalicylate (pepto bismol) is helpful, and we recommend 2 tablets 4 times a day unless you are taking Doxycycoine. If prevention doesn't work, and you find yourself suffering, the following table can guide you towards treatment.

Clinical Syndrome	Recommended Treatment
Mild: 1-2 loose stools/ 24 hours, minimal symptoms	None; stay hydrated – see Formula below, continue pepto bismol
Moderate: >3 loose stools/24 hours, tolerable symptoms	Lomotil; stay hydrated, add antibacterial therapy if symptoms persist>3days.
Moderate – Severe symptoms (no fever or bloody stool) nausea, mod-severe abdominal cramps	Antibiotic bid for 3-5 days and stay hydrated(may stop antibiotic sooner if symptoms resolve completely)
Bloody diarrhea or fever & diarrhea	same as above
Vomiting, minimal diarrhea	Pepto bismol, stay hydrated

Recipe for rehydration: To 1 L of potable water (bottled, boiled, or purified), add ½ tsp table salt, ¼ tsp salt substitute, ½ tsp baking soda, 2-3 tbsp sugar or 2 Tbsp honey or light corn syrup. (if salt substitute and baking soda are unavailable, add 1 tsp table salt)

CIPROFLOXIN DOSAGE GUIDELINES

Infection	Type or Severity	Unit Dose	Frequency	Usual Durations
Acute Sinusitis	Mild/Moderate	500 mg	q 12 h	10 days
Urinary Tract	Acute/Uncomplicated	100 mg	q 12 h	3 days
	Mild/Moderate	250 mg	q 12 h	7 to 14 days
	Severe/Complicated	750 mg	q 12 h	7 to 14 days
Skin & Skin Structure	Mild/Moderate	500 mg	q 12 h	7 to 14 days
	Severe/Complicated	750 mg	q 12 h	7 to 14 days
Infectious Diarrhea	Mild/Mod/Severe	500 mg	q 12 h	5 to 7 days
Typhoid Fever	Mild/Moderate	500 mg	q 12 h	10 days

BACK HOME

Seek medical attention ASAP, up to a year after travel, if you experience any severe symptoms such as fever, prolonged cough, weight loss, diarrhea, abdominal pain, bleeding, unusual rashes, etc. Be sure to inform the health provider about your travels and any known exposures to TB, blood borne pathogens (which you should already have reported to Ellie Lannen while abroad), GI pathogens, exotic parasites, etc. Also, make sure to get a PPD three months after you return.