



# Travel Guide

*A guide to health and safety  
for the oil and gas professional*



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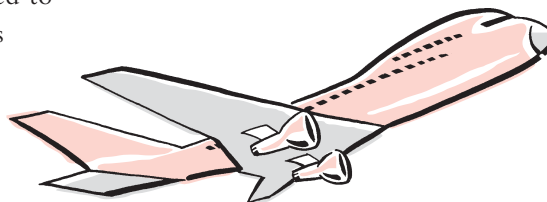
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## *Introduction: notes on this Guide*

The dispersed nature of the multinational facilities of the oil and gas industry leads to extensive international and transoceanic travel at all organizational levels. It has been estimated that some employees travel as much as—and possibly more than—their peers in any other single segment of industry. This booklet gives some simple travel health guidance notes that can either be used and distributed to employees ‘as is’, or adapted for use as part of an ‘in-house’ health management programme.

*Remember that these notes are no substitute for professional medical advice. Wherever possible, seek up-to-date information and recommendations from a qualified physician or a Health Care Professional with experience in international travel health requirements.*





## Travelling: general

Frequent business travel is time-consuming, tiring, stressful and fraught with potential medical and health pitfalls. While all travel can be stressful, business travel can be especially so: it can involve multiple flights over many time zones, changes in food, culture and host environment, not to mention separation from a family support structure coupled with the need to achieve certain tasks within specified timescales. Quite apart from the potential risks to employee health and safety, travel-related ill health

costs our industry millions of dollars in lost time every year.

Following the simple guidance given in this document will help with forward planning for travel and, specifically, will help you to effectively manage the potential for health complications, be more relaxed and productive while you are away, and acclimatize better and faster on your return.





## *Before travelling: trip preparation*

### **Health status**

Knowing your health status before you embark on business travel is key to being able to plan for potential health problems before they arise. Don't procrastinate over visits to the dentist or doctor—get known problems dealt with before you go, to avoid the risk of becoming ill on a trip and being forced to use unknown facilities in other countries. If you have known allergies or other conditions—particularly if they are medication-related—ensure that you either wear an identification bracelet or keep a list of them in your wallet along with a note of your blood group. If you carry a prescription medication on your travels, take it in the original container or carry a copy of the prescription with you.

Maintaining basic fitness levels during periods at home will help you cope with the pressures of travel and also reduce the likelihood of problems while you are away. Many of us ignore the basics such as managing weight, alcohol intake and smoking, which are themselves more difficult to control during travel. Most oil and gas companies insist on a complete physical prior to a long-term transfer to another country. However if

you are temporarily working in a high-risk or isolated area with limited access to health care, a pre-trip checkup with your medical service provider may be advisable. Consult your company physician on this.

### **Medical fitness to travel**

You should recognize that despite the needs and demands of your work and schedules, there are times when it is inadvisable—or even dangerous—to travel, particularly by air. These include, but are not limited to:

- within six weeks of having undergone major surgery;
- in the first or third trimesters of pregnancy, or if visiting a malarial area while pregnant; and
- if suffering from any chronic illness which is not stable or properly controlled through medication: examples are cardiac conditions such as irregular heartbeat (arrhythmias), high or low blood pressure (hypertension) and diabetes.

*If in any doubt, consult your health professional prior to making travel arrangements.*



## Before travelling: trip preparation

### Immunizations and malaria prophylaxis



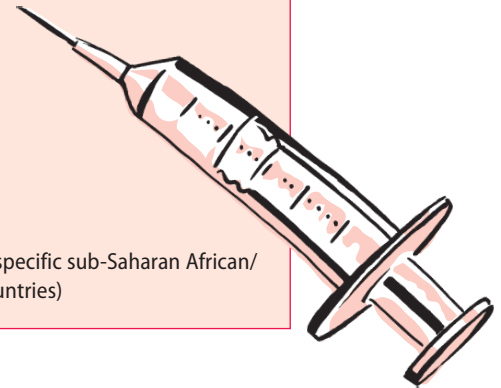
International Certificate of Vaccination as approved by the World Health Organization

Being properly protected (e.g. through immunization or other means) against the range of infectious diseases likely to be encountered on a trip is vital. Disease risks vary, not only from country to country but also in different areas of the same country. Because of this you need to determine which areas you are likely to visit well in advance, and establish the latest risks and the recommendations or requirements<sup>1</sup> for effective protection against those risks. Epidemiological situations

can change rapidly. Before travelling, obtain up-to-date information regarding ongoing outbreaks, travel restrictions or additional vaccinations recommended for the area you are travelling to (see references on page 27 of this document).

#### Recommended basic immunizations for frequent international travellers to maintain 'in date'

- tetanus
- polio
- diphtheria
- typhoid
- hepatitis A and B
- yellow fever
- influenza
- meningitis (some specific sub-Saharan African/Middle Eastern countries)



If you do not have access to a travel health clinic, it is possible to research this yourself on the Internet using the references given at the end of this document.

Achieving maximum protection against infectious diseases may involve a course of several immunizations over a period of time (i.e. weeks or months), and maintaining protection involves having regular 'boosters'. It is therefore important to plan carefully and well ahead of your departure date. If your work is likely to take you anywhere in the world at short notice, it is suggested that you keep a basic set of immunizations current.

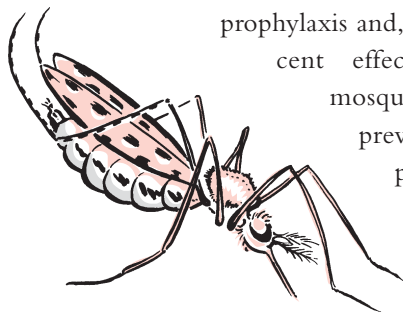
<sup>1</sup> Whilst in some cases immunizations are simply advised, in others (e.g. yellow fever) it is a legal requirement. In some countries you will be required to show proof of immunization (usually recorded in an official document issued by the World Health Organization—see above) prior to entry if you have travelled through or from an infected area. Failure to have the correct document of proof could result in refusal of entry or a requirement to undergo immunization at the point of entry.



## *Before travelling: trip preparation*

However remember that additional immunizations or prophylaxes (e.g. against malaria) may be recommended by your Health Care Professional, depending on the area you are visiting.

Malaria prevention involves both drug prophylaxis and, because no drug is 100 per cent effective, measures to avoid mosquito bites. Advice on prevention of malaria is particularly difficult, because the disease develops variable degrees of resistance to the drugs used for prophylaxis; this is why bite prevention is so important. The development of resistance results in changing advice compounded by the fact that not all of the malaria drugs are licensed for use or available in every country. This often means that travellers from different home countries are given different advice about which prophylactic drugs to use. However these differences should not be interpreted as one drug being more or less effective than another in a particular circumstance.



### **Personal medication and other supplies/appliances**

Despite the fact that major drug companies are multinational, their products vary from country to country. Any prescription medication obtained in your home country may not therefore be available at your destination. Ensure that you carry a sufficient supply (allowing for delays) of all required prescription medications, and that they are in properly labelled containers to avoid problems at customs etc. The latter is especially important for 'sensitive' medications.

Essential prescription medications, spare spectacles, contact lens solution etc. should always be carried in your hand baggage; never pack anything in hold luggage that you cannot do without or easily replace at your destination.



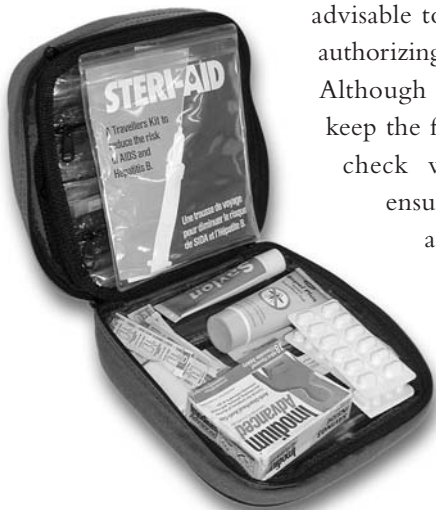


## Before travelling: trip preparation

### First aid kit

A small but carefully equipped first aid kit to treat minor ailments such as small cuts, diarrhoea, colds, headaches, etc. is an advantage as it can provide temporary relief until you are able to seek medical attention in the normal way. In some developing countries, where sterilization practices are questionable, it is an advantage to carry supplies such as sterile needles, syringes, and suture material. Ready-made and sealed kits are available.

For all first aid equipment it is advisable to obtain a certificate authorizing your individual use. Although it is preferable to keep the first aid kit with you, check with the airline to ensure that these items are allowed on board as cabin baggage.



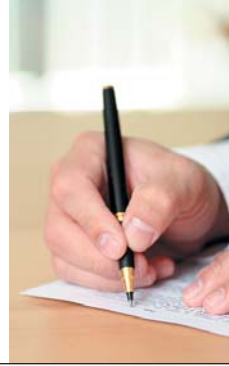
### A traveller's first aid kit could include:

- Simple treatments for:
  - motion sickness
  - insomnia
  - traveller's diarrhoea (e.g. rehydration salts, anti-diarrhoeal)
  - analgesia (e.g. paracetamol/acetaminophen)
  - skin irritation
  - allergy
- Skin antiseptic /antifungal
- Small dressings for cuts/abrasions
- Insect repellent (DEET based, 30–35%)

*NOTE: each kit should include a 'certificate' stating that it has been issued for the use of the named holder.*

### Travelling with over-the-counter medications

Take care with medications which may be freely available 'over the counter' in some countries but where use or possession is banned in others. Although only a few dozen cases of this occur every year, the consequences of this simple mistake can be severe, and include imprisonment, even for an



## *Before travelling: trip preparation*

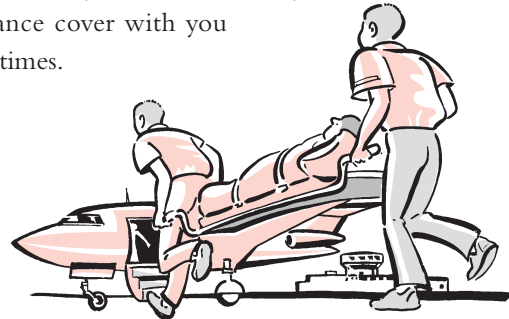
honest mistake. Be particularly careful with combination analgesics containing even small amounts of codeine. These are considered ‘scheduled’ substances in many Middle Eastern, Asian, and even some European countries, although codeine is widely used in others. Other medications that could cause misunderstandings include common cold remedies containing pseudoephedrine or phenylephrine (e.g. Sudafed and nasal decongestant inhalers—illegal in Japan), and Ibuprofen (prescription-only in Singapore). The above examples are for illustration only and are not comprehensive. Try to check before you leave and if in doubt—don’t pack it.

### **Emergency arrangements— travel and health insurance**

You should ensure that you, or your company, have made satisfactory arrangements for medical treatment, notification of next-of-kin and emergency repatriation in the event you are taken ill or have an accident while on your trip. If you are covered by one of the global accident/medical emergency service schemes, this notification may be made automatically to your company—but you

need to make sure that your details are kept up-to-date at your home office.

If you are not covered by one of these schemes, you should consider taking out personal health cover. If travel arrangements were made using a major credit card, some level of cover may already be included. You should carry details of any insurance cover with you at all times.



# Health during travel: stress, fatigue, kinetosis, DVT



## Stress and fatigue

The role of stress and fatigue related to business travel are underestimated and include the dislocating, disorientating and debilitating effects of jet lag (covered in a later section), simple tiredness, physical and emotional disturbances, anxiety, etc. The pressures are compounded by the fact that, usually, most trips are preceded by an extra work effort in preparation, and followed by an additional workload on return as the results of the trip are implemented—as well as dealing with the backlog of work that has accumulated during the trip.

The stresses associated with travel are made worse by departing from established routines, particularly sleep, diet, exercise, alcohol intake and family/social contacts. Successful travellers

report that maintaining established routines—particularly exercise—and adapting others is key to minimizing the effects. See the box on the right for suggestions on how to minimize stress during travel. In addition to paying attention to the physical



## Coping strategies for stress

- Don't schedule back-to-back trips. Allow a rest time of at least 10 days between trips.
- Make your travelling experience pleasant—use lounges where available, and complete work assignments before leaving to avoid working hunched over a laptop in a cramped airline seat.
- Schedule trips and flying time carefully—allow a day to equilibrate after arrival and prior to working. Don't cut connection times too fine—allow for delays and make 'fail-safe' travel arrangements.
- Choose hotels that will allow you to maintain your exercise routine. If it is a first visit speak to colleagues who have visited to get a 'mental picture' of what to expect from the location.
- Try to avoid alcohol and coffee—especially on the flight.
- Eat sparingly, sensibly and well.
- Try 'cat napping' wherever possible (max 30 minutes). One session can provide hours of renewed focus and energy.
- Try to include some exercise such as walking.



## *Health during travel: stress, fatigue, kinetosis, DVT*

health aspects, maintaining emotional well-being should not be neglected. With the advent of the Internet and e-mail (available in even remote locations) cost-effective communications with family and support systems at home is now possible, e.g. through web-based e-mail, and Internet text-messaging interfaces to mobile phones.

### **Kinetosis**

Kinetosis—more commonly known as motion sickness—is a condition characterized by waves of nausea and vomiting experienced as a result of repeated variations in position of the body in space. The intensity of symptoms may vary from a slight illness to a total inability to function. Usually the problem starts with restlessness, sweating, tiredness and pallor, leading to nausea and vomiting. Over-the-counter seasickness medication is available that, taken two hours beforehand, prevents the occurrence of motion sickness.

The following simple behavioural suggestions may also help prevent or diminish the symptoms:

- Looking out of the window of a moving vehicle towards the horizon in the

direction of travel. This helps to re-orient the inner sense of balance by providing a visual reaffirmation of motion.

- Avoid reading, consumption of alcohol, smoking, or heavy/frequent meals.
- Sleeping/napping. This resolves the input conflict between the eyes and the inner ear. Napping also helps prevent psychogenic effects (i.e. the effect of sickness being magnified by dwelling on the problem).
- Exposure to fresh, cool air (e.g. on a ship's deck) can also help to relieve motion sickness. Try to pick a position near the axes of motion of the vessel to minimize movement.

### **Deep vein thrombosis (DVT)**

There is growing concern amongst air travellers, particularly those frequently using long-haul flights, about the risk of developing deep vein thrombosis (DVT) and subsequent pulmonary embolism. It has been known since WWII that any individual who has been seated or immobile for prolonged periods, e.g. in a theatre or vehicle, may also be at similar risk.



## Health during travel: stress, fatigue, kinetosis, DVT

Although research has identified air travel as a common factor in DVT cases, it does not provide conclusive evidence that flying, *per se*, is the specific risk. It does however indicate that, although the dehydration that can occur in an aircraft environment may in some way contribute to the risk of developing a DVT, it is the immobility and/or possible constriction of the lower limbs that are important factors. DVTs occur in any population and, in addition to immobility, several conditions have been identified which increase an individual's susceptibility to, and risk of, DVT (see box below).

The presence of one or more of these conditions will generally increase the level of

risk. This advice applies to flights of more than 3–4 hours duration. The risk of DVT can be reduced by taking certain precautions (see box below, and exercise routines on pages 14–15).

### Am I at risk of DVT?

Research has shown that you have a greater risk of experiencing a DVT episode if one or more of the following conditions are present:

- previous/family history of DVT
- malignancy
- hormone treatment
- recent surgery (within six weeks)
- abnormalities of blood clotting factors
- recent trauma involving the lower limbs

### DVT: some strategies to reduce the risk

- Avoid dehydration: drink plenty of water.
- Avoid smoking.
- Avoid alcohol.
- Avoid crossing legs when seated.
- Stretch your legs: get up and walk around the cabin on a regular basis when awake. On flights longer than 4–6 hours, however, try to get as much rest as possible in an horizontal position.
- Stand up in your seat area and stretch your arms and legs.
- **Carry out the foot and leg exercises on pages 14–15 ...**
- Wear loose fitting comfortable clothes when travelling.
- Avoid tight socks that constrict the lower leg/calf.
- Seek medical advice before travelling if concerned about DVT or other risk factors.
- Use 'flight socks' (graduated elastic support stockings) during long-haul air travel.



# Travel Guide Exercises

Follow the easy steps on these two pages to help prevent tiredness, stiffness and the risk of circulatory problems when travelling, particularly on long-haul flights.

## Exercise 1

### a) Ankle circles

With a pillow under your thigh, circle your foot around ten times in each direction keeping the leg as still as possible.

### b) Calf exercise

With the foot flat on the ground push the ball of the foot, and then the heel, into the ground for five seconds. Do this:

- with the foot pulled back slightly under the chair;
- with the knee at a right angle; and
- with the leg stretched out a little.

## Exercise 2

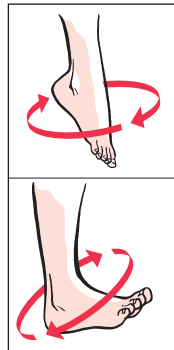
**Sit correctly:** sit upright and avoid crossing your legs. Place a pillow in your lower back to keep the natural curve of the spine.

## Exercise 3

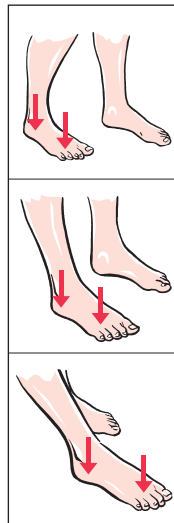
**a) Shoulder circles:** sit forward slightly, then circle your shoulders forwards, upwards, backwards and downwards. Repeat six times. Then simply raise and lower your shoulders six times.

## Exercise 1

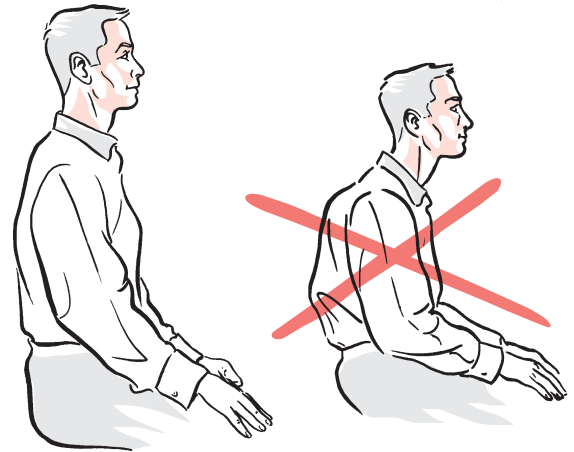
### a) ankle circles



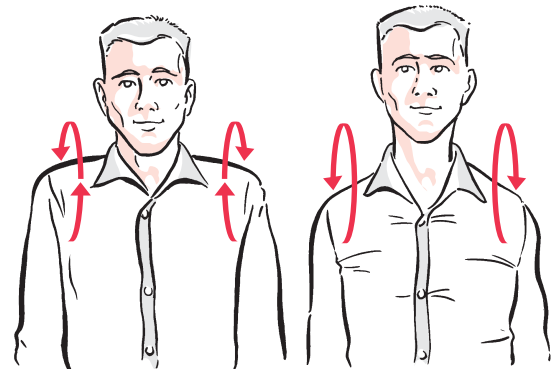
### b) calf exercise



## Exercise 2



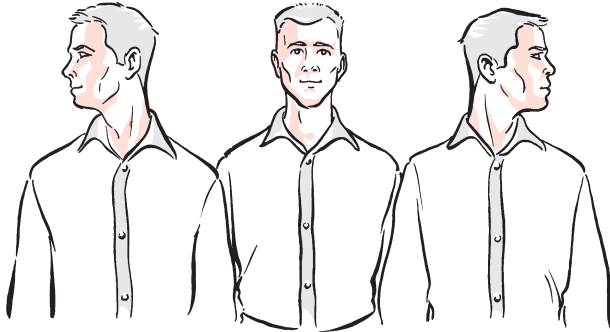
## Exercise 3





## Travel Guide Exercises

### Exercise 4



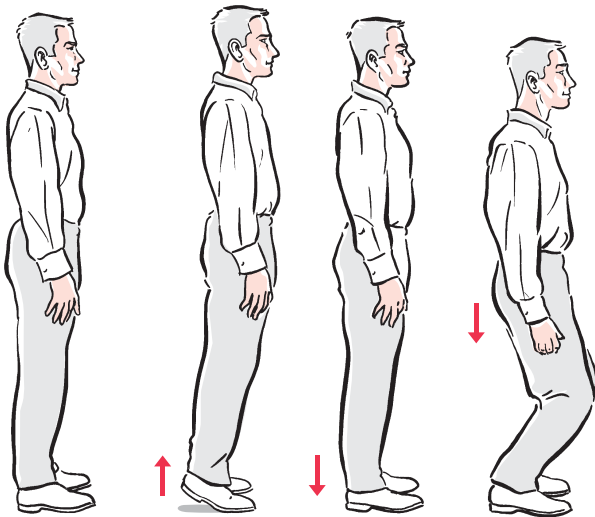
### Exercise 4

**Neck rolls:** slowly and gently roll your head from side to side. Repeat several times.

### Exercise 5

**Standing:** with feet apart, rise onto your toes, then lower your heels to the ground. Bend the knees slightly, pause, then straighten to return to the start position.

### Exercise 5

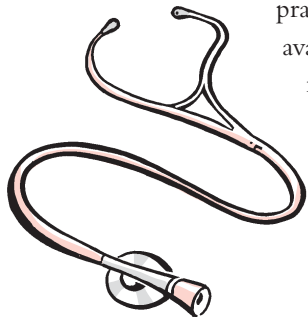




## Health on arrival: care at the destination

### Seeking medical attention

Accessing medical care can be a problem for the traveller. In addition to possible language difficulties, the standards of medical practice, the facilities and the treatments available may vary considerably from an individual's home experience.



'Be prepared' is the best advice: it is obviously better to research the availability of medical attention before it may be required. Many companies have researched the locations that employees may visit and will already have information. Alternatively employees whose companies belong to one of the medical insurance/assistance schemes mentioned earlier usually have a 24-hour help line through which to obtain a list of local approved clinics and facilities. Other sources of assistance include the larger hotels which usually have access to a doctor/clinic, or Red Cross, Red Crescent or Red Crystal society hospitals. Local embassies maintain lists of doctors and hospitals for their citizens to use in an emergency.

### Jet lag

As humans we have evolved to be awake during the day and asleep at night. As a result, exposure to light is the most important factor in regulating our internal body clock and this may therefore be used as a strategy to assist travellers to manage jet lag. The relationship between the timing of light exposure and its effect on jet lag is complex, and inappropriate exposure may even make jet lag worse. However, in general, if you are crossing six

#### Jet lag—coping strategies

- Avoid alcohol, caffeine and excess food on flights.
- Ensure you are not dehydrated—drink plenty of water prior to and during a flight.
- Sleep freely on trips lasting less than three days. When travelling by air, consider using ear plugs and eye shades to help you rest.
- Try to sleep in multiples of one and a half hours to fit normal sleep cycle length.
- Try to synchronize meal times and sleeping patterns to your new environment as soon as possible on longer trips.
- Try to avoid business immediately after arrival. A delay of 12 or, better still, 24 hours is advised.





## *Health on arrival: care at the destination*

time zones or more, your adjustment to local time will be hastened by avoiding morning light and actively seeking afternoon light. More detailed advice on light and jet lag—as well as a trip specific calculator—can be obtained from the British Airways website at: [www.britishairways.com/travel/drsleep/public/en\\_gb](http://www.britishairways.com/travel/drsleep/public/en_gb).

The effects of jet lag are subject to each individual's susceptibility and can include insomnia, disorientation, tiredness/irritability, as well as changes in eating, sleeping and bowel habits.

Jet lag is often cited as the cause of symptoms, while neglecting the role of stress, fatigue or anxiety about the travel itself. The rule of thumb is that recovery from jet

lag takes 24 hours per time zone crossed, although regular travellers may find that they can do considerably better than this in practice. There is little that can be done to reset jet lag, although some success is claimed for the hormone melatonin which is sold as a food supplement in some health stores (although many countries, including the UK, do not permit its sale). Melatonin is a naturally occurring hormone that plays a key role in

normal body rhythms. Available in pill form, it may reduce the amount of time it takes to adjust to time zone changes, but dosing is complicated and imprecise. There is no information on the long-term effects of taking melatonin, and currently there is no way to guarantee the purity or accurate dosing of this non-prescription, over-the-counter supplement.

Sleep medications (antihistamines, barbiturates, benzodiazepines, and others) may play a role in resetting the natural clock by forcing sleep on a new schedule appropriate for the travel destination. Some travellers like to use them to induce sleep during long flights, and during normal sleeping hours for the first couple of nights at their travel destinations. These medications frequently inhibit natural body movements, which can increase the risk for blood clots during long flights, and others may exacerbate the dehydration caused by long airplane flights. Many sleep medications are addictive and should not be mixed with alcohol which can significantly intensify their effects and produce a hangover effect.

If you are considering taking melatonin or any other type of sleep inducing preparation or medication, you should consult your health provider/company physician first.





## *Health on arrival: care at the destination*

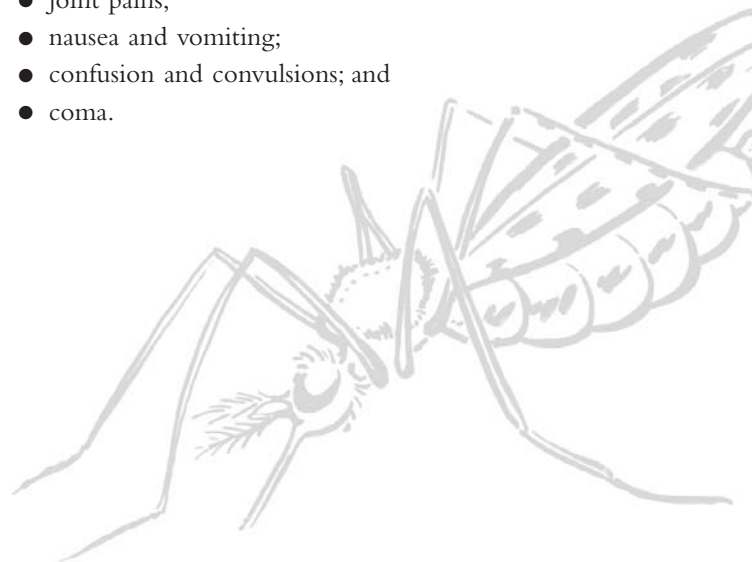
Few travellers are completely incapacitated by jet lag, which is more of a nuisance than a serious hindrance and you should be able to cope using the strategies outlined in the box on page 16. It is important, however, to recognize that your body's physical and psychological functioning may not be optimal after a long flight, and that some impairment of judgement and motor skills may be present. Extra care should be taken in all activities, particularly driving, especially in a strange environment, or when making business decisions.

### **Malaria**

Malaria is a blood-borne disease caused by the bite of an infected female anopheles mosquito. There is an incubation period of between 9–14 days after infection (although this may be longer). The symptoms may be vague or cyclical at first but can quickly progress to a life-threatening illness.

Symptoms may include:

- fever;
- headache;
- joint pains;
- nausea and vomiting;
- confusion and convulsions; and
- coma.





## Health on arrival: care at the destination

### Vector-borne diseases: strategies for protection

#### BITE PREVENTION AND AVOIDANCE IS THE OBJECTIVE

- Wear long clothing after dusk, which is when most mosquitoes feed. Don't forget to protect the ankles as well.
- Sleep under a mosquito net impregnated with an insecticide such as *Permethrin*.
- Use air conditioning if possible.
- Use an insect repellent such as DEET (30–35%) on exposed areas of skin. Use mosquito coils or spray in the room—particularly in dark areas (under beds, etc.) where mosquitoes frequently hide.
- Avoid locations where mosquitoes are common, e.g. near water.

Because of the incubation period, many cases of malaria only become evident after returning home (see 'Returning home: delayed onset problems' on page 27). Rapid diagnosis to exclude malaria is essential. Do not delay getting professional help, even if you start to feel better, because these improvements may be temporary.

If you have been travelling in a malarious area and need medical treatment on returning

home, it is important to mention this to your physician who may never have encountered a case of malaria in his professional lifetime and so may not consider it as a possible diagnosis. Additionally there are documented cases of malaria in passengers from aircraft that make intermediate refuelling stops in an infected area, even though the departure and destination airports are in non-infected countries. In some cases, infection occurs prior to aircraft spraying, when the doors are left open for safety reasons during servicing etc. In other cases, spraying fails to kill mosquitoes in poorly ventilated areas (baggage lockers, etc.).

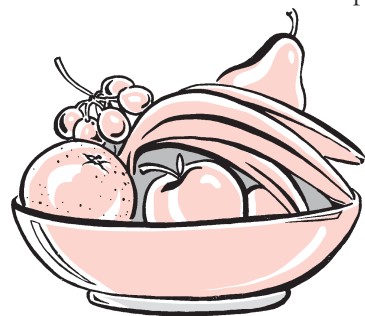
Depending on the country of destination and geographic area, insects or ticks may transmit diseases other than malaria. Although major risks may be related to yellow fever (for which vaccination is required), the possibility of leishmaniasis and dengue fever should not be excluded. Unlike malaria, there is no chemoprophylaxis for dengue fever, and the early clinical symptoms are often mistaken for malaria. If you are intending to visit an area where dengue fever is present, take time to research the symptoms prior to your visit. Physical protection strategies are similar to those for malaria.



## Health on arrival: care at the destination

### Food and water safety

In many parts of the world there is a higher risk of contracting infectious diseases, e.g. travellers diarrhoea (the commonest health problem experienced) through poor hygiene practices and consumption of contaminated food and water. Much of this risk can be avoided by following the guidance set out in the box on the right.



Hepatitis is also one of the common food- and water-borne diseases contracted by travellers; it is 100 times more common than typhoid, and 1000 times more common than cholera. Hepatitis is a potentially fatal liver disease which can be contracted from contaminated food and drink or from accidental contact with infected human faeces.

Symptoms include:

- fever, tiredness;
- dark urine and pale stools;
- aching muscles;
- nausea and vomiting; and
- yellow skin (jaundice).

### Water, food and personal hygiene

- Always follow the rules: 'Cook it, Peel it, Boil it'. Eat only cooked vegetables, avoid salads, and peel fruit.
- Cook all meat thoroughly and eat it hot whenever possible.
- Avoid leftovers and reheated food.
- Shellfish, even when well cooked, is a **high risk** food. If in doubt—leave it.
- Avoid food from roadside stalls and informal eating houses.
- Maintain strict personal hygiene: wash your hands frequently and always immediately prior to eating.
- Do not drink water without first boiling it for an extended period, or filtering it in a specially designed water purifier, unless you are absolutely certain of its source.
- If in doubt, use bottled water from a trusted source in sealed bottles—use this water also to make ice and for cleaning teeth.
- Boil unpasteurised milk prior to use—avoid ice cream and yoghurt-based foods.
- Keep your hepatitis vaccinations up to date.



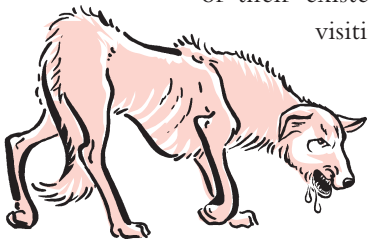
## *Health on arrival: care at the destination*

Effective vaccines against hepatitis A and B are available which give long-term protection and which should be considered mandatory when travelling to high-risk areas, in particular parts of Asia, Africa, and Central and South America. Even if you are vaccinated it remains important to take particular care with food, water and personal hygiene. Even if water is reportedly safe to drink for local residents it may cause problems for travellers. Remember that even when water is provided in separate flasks there is no guarantee of its safety. Be aware that the practice of refilling proprietary mineral water bottles with tap water is widespread in some countries and never accept one with a broken seal.

### **Animal hazards**

Nature is populated by animals, reptiles and insects that can bite or sting. Becoming aware of their existence in the area you will be visiting, and thus the precautionary measures to adopt, is prudent.

In many parts of the world, animals such as cats, dogs, monkeys etc., can be carriers of



infectious diseases, e.g. rabies. Avoidance of any contact is the most effective prevention, and even if an animal appears friendly it should not be approached or disturbed. Rabies can be transmitted by a bite, a scratch or a lick onto broken skin from an infected mammal.

If you get bitten:

- Thoroughly cleanse the wound with soap and water, encourage limited bleeding, and apply alcohol if possible. Do not allow the wound to be stitched or closed. Applying iodine if available will help reduce bacteria in the wound.
- Seek medical advice for vaccinations as soon as possible. In the absence of early intervention, rabies is potentially fatal!

**DO NOT WAIT** until you return home before seeking treatment.

### **Swimming**

Swim only in well-maintained, chlorinated pools (check smell), or ocean water known to be free of pollution and strong currents. Indicated pool depths may not be accurate so check them before diving in. Avoid swimming or paddling in fresh water ponds, streams and



## *Health on arrival: care at the destination*

rivers where parasites, e.g. the blood fluke which causes bilharzia (also known as schistosomiasis) or dangerous animals may exist. Wear sandals to avoid walking with bare feet on damp soil which may be infested with parasites e.g. hookworm, or if paddling in the sea where there is a risk of cuts from coral, rubbish or where fish with poisonous spines live (e.g. stonefish).

### **Sexually transmitted diseases, AIDS and blood-borne diseases**

Sexual relations with an unknown partner, or taking advantage of the ready availability of commercial sex workers in some regions, is extremely high risk behaviour. Even the use of prophylactics/condoms does not guarantee the absence of transmission of a range of diseases, including hepatitis and HIV/AIDS. Even seemingly innocuous behaviour such as tattooing carries an infection risk and should be avoided.

Contaminated blood products, needles, syringes, etc. can and do spread HIV and hepatitis. If you bring a sterile needle/syringe kit with you, ensure that you carry it with you at all times and insist that they are used

on you when attending local medical facilities. If in doubt about the quality of medical facilities use steri-strips to close superficial lacerations (do this yourself if possible).

In the event of an accident, a need for emergency surgery, dental work or any other invasive procedure, you **MUST** ensure that these services are provided under the authorisation of your company physician/medical services provider to eliminate the potential for transmission of infection.

### **Heat-related conditions**

Oil and gas operations frequently occur in hot and humid areas where the risk of contracting diseases related to heat and UV exposure may be higher.

Some general rules for protecting yourself in hot and humid areas are:

- Keep yourself hydrated with water and increase water intake particularly following exertion or manual work outside.
- In desert areas, take extra care to avoid venomous insects, snakes, etc., and check particularly in clothing and shoes before wearing.



## *Health on arrival: care at the destination*

- Use sun protection in order to avoid the effects of sunburn in the case of extensive outdoor exposure. Sun protection may include use of sun creams, appropriate clothes (e.g. a hat), sun glasses, etc.
- Remember that many medications such as common antibiotics, some anti-hypertensives and anti-inflammatory drugs such as Ibuprofen, may increase sensitivity to sunlight and the risk of getting sunburn.
- Remember that your body may take time to adjust and acclimatize, particularly when the climate is tropical and extreme heat conditions occur.



## *Safety and security: yourself and your property*

### **Hotel fire safety**

When checking in to your hotel room, take time to locate the fire exit and alternate emergency exit routes, and ensure that they provide clear, unlocked access to the outside. Do not accept a room if it does not meet these criteria.

### **Personal security**

Security is an issue no matter where you travel. Although the actual level and nature of the risks will vary with destinations and activities to be undertaken, there are some general ‘rules’:

- Dress inconspicuously and informally during travel. Valuable jewellery should not be worn. Always maintain custody of cases prior to check-in and keep your carry-on luggage with you at all times. Never reveal your travel plans to strangers or fellow travellers. Consider sending sensitive documents to your destination ahead of time via courier.
- Familiarize yourself with the arrivals procedure before arriving at an unfamiliar destination. If you are being

met, ensure that your hosts are fully aware of when your flight arrives, and of any changes en route. Be circumspect about your travel from the airport and, wherever possible, do not engage the services of taxi touts. Ensure you have sufficient local currency (or readily exchangeable currency) on you to take a taxi or make a phone call from the airport.

- Especially in high-risk areas, travel with a lockable hard suitcase. Although less convenient than soft luggage, it provides a somewhat greater level of security if you have to leave valuable items (e.g. a camera) in your room, particularly in the absence of a room safe.
- Irreplaceable or difficult to replace items (e.g. passport) should be carried on the person at all times.
- Place the ‘do not disturb’ sign outside the door during temporary absences from the room, and leave the television or radio on. Guest names should not be completed on forms left outside the door (laundry, breakfast, etc.) as this can lead to individuals fraudulently obtaining duplicate keys.





## *Safety and security: yourself and your property*

- Take local advice wherever possible to establish what activities and destinations are safe. When planning your travel, try to select flights that arrive at, and leave, your destination during daylight hours, to avoid travelling to or from the airport at night.
- In many cities worldwide it is not safe to walk alone at night. When walking in the city during the day, remain on the major thoroughfares and do not take short cuts through side streets and alleyways. Try to establish your route prior to leaving the hotel. If in doubt, take a taxi to your destination.

### **Personal safety—vehicles**

*Always* wear a seat belt. If you are renting a vehicle you should be aware that certain types of vehicles (e.g. four-wheel drives) are proven hijack and security risks in certain countries. Seek local advice wherever possible. Ensure that the doors of ANY vehicle you travel in are locked, and do not lean any part of the body, in particular your wristwatch arm, out of a vehicle window.

Never enter a vehicle without checking that the rear seat is empty, and never exit a vehicle without checking for suspicious individuals. Always lock a vehicle when unattended—wherever located. When parking, try to find somewhere well-lit and busy, and never leave anything of value in an unattended vehicle.





## *Safety and security: yourself and your property*

Obtain local knowledge on road conditions prior to a long journey and never pick up hitchhikers. Keep the vehicle fuel tank at least half-full.

If you should be involved in an accident in a rental or company vehicle make certain you follow local custom with regard to reporting procedures. In some countries you must not move the vehicle—even if it is blocking the road—until the police have arrived to take statements. It is unwise to admit liability or to part with any money. You should establish the bona fides of any official requesting you to leave the scene.

In the unlikely event of a vehicle hijacking, try to remember the following:

- Hijackers may be armed. Do not resist or contemplate heroic acts. Do not make sudden or unexpected movements, i.e. if asked to hand over keys to a vehicle.
- Avoid eye contact. Maintain a calm demeanour.
- Exit the vehicle promptly, if so directed. In the event you are held captive (i.e. while being driven to a remote drop-off location) stay alert, but do not challenge your captors physically or verbally. Passive cooperation is your best defence. Again, avoid eye contact.

## Returning home: delayed onset problems

The most frequent complaints associated with a return home after a trip—apart from the stress of getting back into a routine—relate to gastrointestinal problems and, rarely, malaria (see pages 18–19).

Make sure your Health Care Professional is aware of your recent travel and any factors that could have contributed to your condition.

### References and further reading

#### References

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*Why Aircraft Disinsection?*

Gratz, Steffen, & Cocksedge,  
WHO Bulletin, 2000, 78 (8)

*International Travel Health Guide.*

Stuart R. Rose, M.D. Twelfth Edition

*Rough Guide to Travel Health.*

Dr Nick Jones, First Edition,  
Penguin Books Limited

*How to Stay Healthy & Fit on the Road*

Dr Joanne V. Lichten  
Available from [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com)

*How to be a Healthy Traveller Series.*

SmithKline Beecham

*Tropical Nights/Tropical Bites.*

AMREF/MASTA, Nairobi

#### Suggested Internet references for further reading

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Travel Health ONLINE

(Shoreland inc.):  
[www.tripprep.com](http://www.tripprep.com)

Travax A—Z of Healthy Travel:

[www.travax.scot.nhs.uk](http://www.travax.scot.nhs.uk)

The Center for Disease Control (CDC) website provides up to date information on travel health alerts and advisories, including guidance for travellers:

[www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)

The International Society of Travel Medicine

[www.istm.org](http://www.istm.org)

The National Travel Health Network and Centre (NaTHNaC)

NaTHNaC is funded by the UK Department of Health

[www.nathnac.org](http://www.nathnac.org)

## The OGP/IIPECA Membership

### Company members

ADNOC	OXY
AgipKCO	OMV
Anadarko Petroleum Corporation	Papuan Oil Search Ltd
BG Group	Perenco Holdings Ltd
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GNPOC	Qatar Petroleum
Hellenic Petroleum	RasGas
Hess	Repsol YPF
Hocol	Saudi Aramco
Hunt Oil Company	Shell International Exploration & Production
Hydro	Sonatrach
Japan Oil, Gas & Metals National Corporation	Statoil
Kuwait Oil Company	TNK-BP Management
Kuwait Petroleum Corporation	TOTAL
Mærsk Olie og Gas	Tullow Oil
Marathon Oil	Wintershall AG
Nexen	Woodside Energy
NOC Libya	Yemen LNG

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Australian Institute of Petroleum	Institut Français du Pétrole
American Petroleum Institute	IADC
ARPEL	IOOA
ASSOMINERARIA	M-I SWACO
Baker Hughes	NOGEPA
Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers	OLF
Canadian Petroleum Products Institute	PAJ
CONCAWE	Schlumberger
Energy Institute	South African Petroleum Industry Association
European Petroleum Industry Association	UKOOA
Halliburton	WEG
IAGC	World Petroleum Congress

## International Association of Oil & Gas Producers (OGP)

OGP represents the upstream oil and gas industry before international organizations including the International Maritime Organization, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) Regional Seas Conventions and other groups under the UN umbrella. At the regional level, OGP is the industry representative to the European Commission and Parliament and the OSPAR Commission for the North East Atlantic. Equally important is OGP's role in promulgating best practices, particularly in the areas of health, safety, the environment and social responsibility.

## International Petroleum Industry Environmental Conservation Association (IIPECA)

The International Petroleum Industry Environmental Conservation Association was founded in 1974 following the establishment of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). IIPECA provides one of the industry's principal channels of communication with the United Nations.

IIPECA is the single global association representing both the upstream and downstream oil and gas industry on key global environmental and social issues. IIPECA's programme takes full account of international developments in these issues, serving as a forum for discussion and cooperation involving industry and international organizations.

IIPECA's aims are to develop and promote scientifically-sound, cost-effective, practical, socially and economically acceptable solutions to global environmental and social issues pertaining to the oil and gas industry. IIPECA is not a lobbying organization, but provides a forum for encouraging continuous improvement of industry performance.

