

Vaccinations

Criteria of vaccination recommendations depend on a wide variety of factors:

- traveller's vaccination and immunity status
- risk of destination country depending on location, duration and type of journey
- entry requirements
- medical history

Before every journey, you should check whether or not the **overall recommended vaccinations** are up-to-date.

Everyone should have sufficient immunity against **tetanus**, **diphtheria**, **pertussis** (whooping cough) and **polio** (booster shot every 10 years).

The **measles**, **mumps** and **rubella** vaccine should be received in two doses during childhood. Adults born after 1970 with an unclear immunity status, without or with only one vaccination ought to be vaccinated.



Particular travel injections

Hepatitis A is an infectious disease found throughout the world and is transmitted via smear infection, infected water or food products. Symptoms are fever, muscle aches, nausea, diarrhoea and following jaundice. The hepatitis A vaccination requires two injections. After the second dose is given 6–12 months after the first one, the protection will last for about 25–30 years. A first dose given directly before going on a journey ensures adequate primary protection.

Hepatitis B is an infection of the liver spread throughout the world. This virus is transmitted through contact with infected body fluids, especially sperm (sexual contact), and blood/ blood substitutes. Symptoms are similar to those of hepatitis A, but the

chronic course is very dangerous. This vaccination is recommended (amongst others) for

- children (in Germany as part of the general vaccination programs)
- travellers staying in malaria risk areas for a longer period of time
- medical staff
- and people living in the same household as infected people.

Only rural areas in Asia are affected by **Japanese Encephalitis**, a disease that causes severe brain inflammation. A vaccination is recommended in case of long-term journeys under simple conditions.

Rabies is transmitted via bite wounds (saliva of dogs, bats, monkeys and foxes). This disease may break out even months or years after an infection and is always lethal, because there is still no effective treatment available. The best prophylaxis is to avoid contact with animals. A vaccination is recommended for adults and children who travel into risk zones.

Typhus is a salmonella infection by *Salmonella typhi*/paratyphi. This disease occurs in countries with bad hygienic conditions. A vaccination is recommended in case of long-term stays.

Cholera is transmitted through contaminated water and is only a problem in case of catastrophes in countries with very low hygienic standards. There is no increased risk for standard travellers.

Yellow fever is a viral disease transmitted by mosquitoes and cannot be treated with medicine. A vaccination is recommended and obligatory for some countries in Central Africa and South America. A vaccination in Germany is only possible in some specialized accredited agencies.

As the name suggests, **tick-borne encephalitis (TBE)** is transmitted by ticks. After harmless flu-like symptoms such as fever, neurological symptoms may develop in rare cases. Three doses (within 6–12 months) are recommended for travellers planning on outdoor activities in endemic areas (Scandinavia, Western and Central Europe and countries of the former Soviet Union).

Influenza (or flu) is caused by influenza viruses, which are divided into various types. For humans, the seasonal influenza A and B

viruses are particularly relevant. Influenza virus infections are spread worldwide. In the temperate zones of the Northern and Southern Hemispheres, flu outbreaks occur regularly in the winter months. Influenza viruses are usually transferred via droplets, particularly when people cough or sneeze. Usual influenza symptoms are characterised by a sudden onset of illness with fever, a dry cough, cold, sore throat, headache and sometimes severe limb and muscle pain. In addition to observing standard hygiene measures such as washing hands, disinfecting surfaces and staying away from people with symptoms of respiratory illness, the main preventative measure is a seasonal vaccine. A vaccine with a tetravalent seasonal flu vaccine is recommended.

The pandemic caused by novel **Coronavirus SARS-CoV-2** and the illness caused by the virus COVID-19 (Corona Virus Disease 2019) is still present and new variants of the virus continue to circulate.

There are regular updates and changes to the restrictions to everyday life in affected countries, travel entry regulations with specific testing requirements and quarantine provisions, and vaccine recommendations. We recommend that travellers pay close attention when travelling to their destination and when returning to Germany.

Dengue fever, caused by the dengue virus, is currently of concern in tropical countries. We are noting a massive increase in infections, particularly in the tropics and subtropics, but also in parts of Europe (France, Spain and Italy). It is transmitted by mosquitoes of the genus *Aedes* (*Aedes albopictus* and *Aedes aegypti*). A dengue virus infection is asymptomatic in around 80% of cases, but it may lead to flu-like symptoms with a high fever and severe limb, muscle and bone pain (break-bone fever). It may also lead to severe bleeding (haemorrhagic fever) and cause death. Second and third infections particularly cause severe dengue fever.

This illness has also recently become preventable by way of a vaccine in Europe and a live vaccine is available for laboratory-verified previous infections.

According to the current vaccination recommendations of the Robert Koch Institute's Standing Committee on Vaccination (STIKO), a vaccination programme taking into account the destination country's regulations using available vaccines should be followed be-

fore travelling. We recommend that you consult your family doctor about this.

For individual queries, please contact the aqua med medical hotline: +49 421 240 110-10.

Further useful online information:
www.crm.de | www.rki.de