

United States

Bryce Canyon National Park

Photo courtesy of Preeyal Gupta, Emory University, USA

Capital City : "Washington, D.C."

Official Language: "English"

Monetary Unit: "dollar (U.S.\$)"

General Information

The information on these pages should be used to research health risks and to inform the pre-travel consultation. For advice regarding safety and security please check the UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) website.

Travellers should ideally arrange an appointment with their health professional at least four to six weeks before travel. However, even if time is short, an appointment is still worthwhile. This appointment provides an opportunity to assess health risks taking into account a number of factors including destination, medical history, and planned activities. For those with pre-existing health problems, an earlier appointment is recommended.

All travellers should ensure they have [adequate travel health insurance](#).

A list of useful resources including advice on how to reduce the risk of certain health problems is available below.

Resources

- [Food and water hygiene](#)
- [Insect and tick bite avoidance](#)
- [Personal safety](#)
- [Sexually transmitted infections](#)
- [Sun protection](#)

Vaccine Recommendations

Details of vaccination recommendations and requirements are provided below.

All Travellers

Travellers should be up to date with routine vaccination courses and boosters as [recommended in the UK](#). These vaccinations include for example [measles-mumps-rubella \(MMR\)](#) vaccine and diphtheria-tetanus-polio vaccine.

Those who may be at increased risk of an infectious disease due to their work, lifestyle choice, or certain underlying health problems should be up to date with additional recommended vaccines. See the individual chapters of the 'Green Book' [Immunisation against infectious disease](#) for further

details.

Certificate Requirements

There are no certificate requirements under International Health Regulations.

Most Travellers

The vaccines in this section are recommended for most travellers visiting this country. Information on these vaccines can be found by clicking on the blue arrow. Vaccines are listed alphabetically.

Tetanus

Tetanus is caused by a toxin released from *Clostridium tetani* and occurs worldwide. Tetanus bacteria are present in soil and manure and may be introduced through open wounds such as a puncture wound, burn or scratch.

Prevention

Travellers should thoroughly clean all wounds and seek appropriate medical attention.

Tetanus vaccination

- Travellers should have completed a primary vaccination course according to the UK schedule.
- If travelling to a country where medical facilities may be limited, a booster dose of a tetanus-containing vaccine is recommended if the last dose was more than ten years ago even if five doses of vaccine have been given previously.

Country specific information on medical facilities may be found in the 'health' section of the [FCO foreign travel advice](#) website.

[Tetanus in brief](#)

Some Travellers

The vaccines in this section are recommended for some travellers visiting this country. Information on when these vaccines should be considered can be found by clicking on the arrow. Vaccines are listed alphabetically.

Rabies

Rabies is a viral infection which is usually transmitted following contact with the saliva of an infected animal most often via a bite, scratch or lick to an open wound or mucous membrane (such as on the eye, nose or mouth). Although many different animals can transmit the virus, most cases follow a bite or scratch from an infected dog. In some parts of the world, bats are an important source of infection.

Rabies symptoms can take some time to develop, but when they do, the condition is almost always fatal.

The risk of exposure is increased by certain activities and length of stay (see below). Children are at increased risk as they are less likely to avoid contact with animals and to report a bite, scratch or lick.

Rabies in USA

Most travellers to this country are considered to be at low risk for rabies. However some animals may pose a greater risk of rabies for travellers, e.g. skunks, racoons and foxes. Bats may carry rabies-like viruses in this country.

Prevention

- Travellers should avoid contact with wild animals including bats. Rabies is preventable with prompt post-exposure management.
- Following a possible exposure, wounds should be thoroughly cleansed and an urgent local medical assessment sought, even if the wound appears trivial. Although rabies has not been reported in domestic animals, it is still sensible to seek prompt medical advice if bitten or scratched by all animals.
- Post-exposure management following contact with wild animals, including bats, should be in accordance with [national guidelines](#).

Rabies vaccination

- Pre-exposure vaccines could be considered for those who are at increased risk of exposure to wild animals especially foxes and bats.

[Rabies in brief](#)

Other Risks

There are some risks that are relevant to all travellers regardless of destination. These may for example include road traffic and other accidents, diseases transmitted by insects or ticks, diseases transmitted by contaminated food and water, sexually transmitted infections, or health issues related to the heat or cold. Some additional risks (which may be present in all or part of this country) are mentioned below and are presented alphabetically.

Altitude

There is a risk of altitude illness when travelling to destinations of 2,500 metres (8,200 feet) or higher. Important risk factors are the altitude gained, rate of ascent and sleeping altitude. Rapid ascent without a period of acclimatisation puts a traveller at higher risk.

There are three syndromes; acute mountain sickness (AMS), high-altitude cerebral oedema (HACE) and high-altitude pulmonary oedema (HAPE). HACE and HAPE require immediate descent and medical treatment.

Altitude illness in USA

There is a point of elevation in this country higher than 2,500 metres. Example places of interest: Mt McKinley 6,194m, Mt Rainier 4,392m, Pikes Peak 4,301m, Leadville 3,100m and Mt Kea (Hawaii) 4,205m.

Prevention

- Travellers should spend a few days at an altitude below 3,000m.
- Where possible travellers should avoid travel from altitudes less than 1,200m to altitudes greater than 3,500m in a single day.
- Ascent above 3,000m should be gradual. Travellers should avoid increasing sleeping elevation by more than 500m per day and ensure a rest day (at the same altitude) every three or four days.
- Acetazolamide can be used to assist with acclimatisation, but should not replace gradual ascent.
- Travellers who develop symptoms of AMS (headache, fatigue, loss of appetite, nausea and sleep disturbance) should avoid further ascent. In the absence of improvement or with progression of symptoms the first response should be to descend.
- Development of HACE or HAPE symptoms requires immediate descent and emergency medical treatment.

[Altitude illness in brief](#)

Biting insects or tick

Insect or tick bites can cause irritation and infections of the skin at the site of a bite. They can also spread certain diseases.

Diseases in North America

There is a risk of insect or tick-borne diseases in some areas of North America. This includes diseases such as [West Nile virus](#).

Prevention

- All travellers should avoid insect and tick bites day and night.

- There are no vaccinations (or medications) to prevent these diseases.

Further information about specific insect or tick-borne diseases for this country can be found, if appropriate on this page, in other sections of the country information pages and the [insect and tick bite avoidance factsheet](#).

Dengue

Dengue is a viral infection transmitted by mosquitoes which predominantly feed between dawn and dusk. It causes a flu-like illness, which can occasionally develop into a more serious life-threatening form of the disease. Severe dengue is rare in travellers.

The mosquitoes that transmit dengue are most abundant in towns, cities and surrounding areas. All travellers to dengue areas are at risk.

Dengue in United States

Dengue outbreaks are reported from time to time in United States. Affected states include Florida, Hawaii, and Texas.

Prevention

- All travellers should avoid mosquito bites particularly between dawn and dusk.
- There is currently no medication or vaccination available for travellers to prevent dengue.

[Dengue in brief](#)

Influenza (seasonal)

Seasonal influenza is a viral infection of the respiratory tract and spreads easily from person to person via respiratory droplets when coughing and sneezing. Symptoms appear rapidly and include fever, muscle aches, headache, malaise (feeling unwell), cough, sore throat and a runny nose. In healthy individuals, symptoms improve without treatment within two to seven days. Severe illness is more common in those aged 65 years or over, those under 2 years of age, or those who have underlying medical conditions that increase their risk for complications of influenza.

Seasonal influenza in United States

Seasonal influenza occurs throughout the world. In the northern hemisphere (including the UK), most influenza occurs from as early as October through to March. In the southern hemisphere, influenza mostly occurs between April and September. In the tropics, influenza can occur throughout the year.

Prevention

All travellers should:

- Avoid close contact with symptomatic individuals
- Avoid crowded conditions where possible
- Wash their hands frequently
- Practise 'cough hygiene': sneezing or coughing into a tissue and promptly discarding it safely, and washing their hands
- Avoid travel if unwell with influenza-like symptoms
- A vaccine is available in certain circumstances (see below)*

***In the UK, seasonal influenza vaccine is offered routinely each year to those at higher risk of developing of severe disease following influenza infection, and certain additional groups such as healthcare workers and children as part of the UK national schedule (see [information on vaccination](#)). For those who do not fall into these groups, vaccination may be available privately.**

If individuals at higher risk of severe disease following influenza infection are travelling to a country when influenza is likely to be circulating they should ensure they received a flu vaccination in the previous 12 months.

The vaccine used in the UK protects against the strains predicted to occur during the winter months of the northern hemisphere. It is not possible to obtain vaccine for the southern hemisphere in the UK, but the vaccine used during the UK influenza season should still provide important protection against strains likely to occur during the southern hemisphere influenza season, and in the tropics.

Avian influenza

Avian influenza viruses can rarely infect and cause disease in humans. Such cases are usually associated with close exposure to infected bird or animal populations. Where appropriate, information on these will be available in the outbreaks and news sections of the relevant country pages. Seasonal influenza vaccines will not provide protection against avian influenza.

[Avian influenza in brief](#)

Zika Virus

Zika virus (ZIKV) is a viral infection transmitted by mosquitoes which predominantly feed between dawn and dusk. A small number of cases of sexual transmission of ZIKV have also been reported. Most people infected with ZIKV have no symptoms. When symptoms do occur they are usually mild and short-lived. Serious complications and deaths are not common. However, ZIKV is a cause of Congenital Zika Syndrome (microcephaly and other congenital anomalies) and neurological complications such as Guillain-Barré syndrome.

Zika virus in Florida and Hidalgo and Cameron Counties in Texas, United States

There is a **very low risk of ZIKV** in Florida and in Hidalgo and Cameron Counties, Texas.

Prevention

- All travellers should avoid mosquito bites particularly between dawn and dusk.
- There is no vaccination or medication to prevent ZIKV infection.

Pregnant women should seek medical advice if they develop ZIKV symptoms or are concerned.

[Zika virus in brief](#)

[Latest News](#)

[Latest Outbreaks](#)