

14 Feb 2019

## Travelling to the USA for the 24th World Scouting Jamboree 2019?

### Travel health advice for the World Scouting Jamboree in West Virginia USA, July 2019

More than 45,000 scouts, aged between 14 and 17 years from 200 nations and territories, congregate in West Virginia USA for the [24th World Scouting Jamboree](#) which takes place from 22 July to 2 August 2019. A mass gathering produces special circumstances that can lead to outbreaks of infection among participants even in countries where that infection is uncommon.

### Advice for travellers

Check our [USA Country Information page](#) for current vaccine and other health advice and see your GP, practice nurse, pharmacist or travel clinic to check you have received all immunisations, offered in the [UK routine immunisation schedule](#), appropriate for your age including [mumps, measles and rubella \(MMR\)](#) and [diphtheria-tetanus-polio](#) vaccines. You should also check that any travel vaccines you had previously remain in date.

The organisers of this event have recommended participants are up to date with [Chicken pox \(varicella\)](#), [Hepatitis A](#), [Hepatitis B](#), [Influenza](#) and [meningococcal ACWY](#) vaccines for this trip.

The vaccines recommended are not usually suggested for travel to the US. Some are available on the NHS for those with special health needs and at particular risk of infection [3]. Influenza vaccine may not be available in the UK during the summer months.

Those who are not eligible for the recommended vaccines on the NHS may decide to make private arrangement to be vaccinated at some high street pharmacies, other retailers, or private travel clinics due to the special circumstances of such mass gatherings that can lead to outbreaks of some infections [4, 5].

There was an outbreak of meningococcal disease linked to the 2015 Jamboree in Japan. Five scouts and one parent from Scotland and Sweden developed meningococcal infection serogroup W within nine days of the event ending [1,2].

Appropriate [travel insurance](#) is essential; remember that a European Health Insurance Card (EHIC) is NOT valid in the USA.

Take a basic first aid kit in accordance with advice from World Scouting Jamboree organisers and unit leaders [6]. See our [Medicines and Travel](#) factsheet for more advice.

It is summer time in USA, so remember to drink plenty of fluids and [protect yourself from the sun](#) with clothes, sun glasses and high factor sun screen [4].

Insects can also be a pest - as well as bites causing irritation, they can spread diseases like [West Nile Virus](#).

Most travellers to the US would be considered at low risk for [rabies](#) infection. Some animals e.g.

skunks, racoons, foxes and bats may pose a risk and bats may carry a rabies- like virus. All travellers should avoid contact with wild animals including bats. A bite, lick or scratch from an animal whilst in the US should be reported and first aid arranged immediately.

Follow [food and water hygiene](#) advice and wash your hands after visiting the toilet and before preparing or eating food. Alcohol gel is useful when hand-washing is not possible. Be prepared to manage [travellers' diarrhoea](#).

Further advice is available in our [general travel health advice fact sheet](#). Make sure you know the latest [travel advice](#) for US by signing up for [FCO email alerts](#).

## Resources

- [Personal safety](#)
- [FCO: Travel Aware](#)
- [World Scouting Jamboree](#)

## References

1. Smith-Palmer A et al. Outbreak of Neisseria meningitidis capsular group W among scouts returning from the World Scout Jamboree, Japan, 2015. Eurosurveillance 2016 Nov 10;21(45): pii=30392 [Accessed February 2019]
2. Kanai M et al. Meningococcal disease outbreak related to the World Scout Jamboree in Japan, 2015. Western Pac Surveill Response J. 2017 May 8;8(2):25-30 [Accessed February 2019]
3. [British Medical Association. Focus on travel immunisation](#). 7 Dec 2018. [Accessed February 2019]
4. Watanabe T et al. Medical Services at an International Summer Camp Event Under Hot and Humid Conditions: Experiences From the 23rd World Scout Jamboree, Japan. Western Environ Med. 2018 Jun; 29(2):159-165 [Accessed February 2019]
5. Jammer Ib et al. Medical services of a multicultural summer camp event: experiences from the 22nd World Scout Jamboree, Sweden 2011. BMC Health Services Research 2013,13:187 [Accessed February 2019]
6. [2019 World Jamboree Medical Guide for Unit Leaders](#)