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Chinese New Year travel advice

Year of the Tiger - important information for those planning to travel abroad to celebrate Chinese New Year in 2022

2022 is the year of the Tiger and Chinese New Year falls on Tuesday 1 February 2022, with celebrations culminating with the Lantern Festival on Tuesday 15 February 2022. Travellers planning to visit [China](#) or other international destinations to celebrate Chinese New Year during the global [COVID-19](#) pandemic should check our [Country Information](#) pages for current health advice.

COVID-19 remains a worldwide risk [1]. Travellers from the United Kingdom (UK) are advised to consider both the risk at their destination and during their journey. All travellers should think carefully about their personal circumstances before travel. This is particularly important for those at [higher risk from COVID-19](#) who should seek medical advice before booking.

Due to the recent identification of the [Omicron](#) variant [2], many countries are introducing enhanced or additional measures for travellers arriving from COVID-19 variant affected areas. As countries can change COVID-19 rules and restrictions very quickly, travellers must ensure they access the latest information on COVID-19 country requirements, including vaccination, [testing](#), border entry, screening and self isolation requirements for their destination. Travellers visiting more than one destination or transiting through different countries must ensure they are aware of the COVID-19 entry rules and requirements for all the stages of their journey.

All travellers must prepare for rapid changes in travel rules both before, during and after travel. This includes making financial provisions for longer than expected trips, increased travel expenses and potentially hotel quarantine costs.

The Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO) provides guidance on COVID-19 and other risks overseas. All travellers should check FCDO [country-specific travel advice](#) for their destination. Travellers can also contact the [UK-based embassy, high commission or consulate](#) of the country they are travelling to for advice.

Travellers should also arrange to see their GP, practice nurse, pharmacist or travel clinic to make sure they are in-date for all recommended travel and routine UK vaccines, including measles, mumps and rubella (MMR).

All travellers to China should be aware of the risk of [avian influenza \(bird flu\)](#) as a record number of human cases of avian influenza (H5N6) were reported from China in 2021 [3]. Most cases involved close contact with infected birds (dead or alive). Markets where live birds are sold (often called “wet markets”) can be sources of infection for Avian Influenza.

Advice for travellers

COVID-19

You should follow [local requirements](#) and always maintain [good hand, respiratory and personal hygiene regardless your vaccination status](#) or whether you have had COVID-19 infection and now recovered.

For further information on travelling during the COVID-19 pandemic see [COVID-19: general advice for travellers](#).

If you become unwell while travelling you must not continue with their journey and should seek medical advice.

If you test positive for COVID-19 abroad, you must follow local public health advice and self-isolate in the country you are in. Once fully recovered, if you have completed the required self-isolation period, you must check with your health provider you are fit to travel before restarting your journey or returning home.

If you are returning to the UK, you are likely to have to follow additional COVID-19 [UK border measures](#).

Avian (bird) influenza

To reduce your risk of avian influenza, you should minimise exposure to any birds (alive or dead) including pets, domestic poultry and wild birds. This includes staying away from live bird or animal markets and poultry farms. In addition, you should:

- avoid touching dead or dying birds and maintain [good hand hygiene](#).
- avoid exposure to any birds or live birds in 'wet markets' as a precaution.

As avian influenza remains a risk in China, any travellers experiencing any flu like symptoms within 10 days of returning from China should call their GP or NHS 111 and report their recent travel [3].

All travellers should be aware of other travel related hazards, including [food and water](#) spread infections and [insect spread illnesses](#). Specific destination advice, including vaccine recommendations, can be found in our [Country Information](#) pages.

Advice for health professionals

The UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) provides clinical guidance for health professionals on the assessment of possible cases of [COVID-19: investigation and initial clinical management of possible cases](#).

Due to the rise in human avian influenza cases in China, the UKHSA has reinforced clinical guidance for health professionals on assessment and investigation of recently returned travellers with severe flu-like illness: [Avian influenza: guidance, data and analysis](#).

Resources

- [COVID-19: Resources](#)
- [GOV. UK: Travel abroad step by step](#)
- [European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control: Avian influenza in humans](#)
- [International travel and demonstrating COVID-19 status](#)
- [UK Health Security Agency: Avian influenza: recognising risk exposures among symptomatic persons with recent international travel](#)
- [World Health Organization: Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) Dashboard](#)
- [World Health Organization: Influenza \(avian and other zoonotic\) factsheet](#)

References

1. [World Health Organization. Weekly epidemiological update on COVID-19. 11 January 2022. \[Accessed 12 January 2022\]](#)
2. [UK Health Security Agency: Investigation of SARS-CoV-2 variants: technical briefings. Last updated 11 January 2022. \[Accessed 12 January 2022\]](#)
3. [UK Health Security Agency: UKHSA reminds travellers to China about the risk of avian flu. Last updated 18 November 2021. \[Accessed 12 January 2022\]](#)