

16 Oct 2024

## Travelling for Diwali

**Celebrating Diwali abroad? Planning ahead helps you and your family enjoy the festivities and safeguards your health overseas**

[Diwali](#) - the five day festival of light celebrated by Hindus, Sikhs and Jains worldwide takes place from 28 October to 2 November this year, with the main celebrations across Wednesday 31 October and Thursday 1 November 2024.

Many people are travelling abroad to celebrate with their families, with major festivities taking place in [India](#), but Diwali is also celebrated in many countries throughout the world.

Reduce your risk of injury and illness by following our Diwali travel health recommendations.

### Advice for travellers

#### Before you go

Be aware that the [World Health Organization has reported a rise in mosquito and insect spread infections](#) in tropical and subtropical countries since 2014.

[India is reporting an increase in insect and mosquito](#) spread illnesses. This includes a rise [chikungunya](#) and [dengue](#), with outbreaks of [Zika virus](#) also being reported in some regions of India.

TravelHealthPro [Country Information pages](#) gives advice on recommended vaccines, malaria prevention and information about other risks, including respiratory infections and insect spread illnesses, along with general guidance about [air quality](#) and [personal safety](#).

Make sure you have all your UK vaccines, like [flu](#), and check all your recommended travel vaccines, such as [typhoid](#) are in date. If you need to see your GP, nurse, pharmacist or attend a travel clinic, arrange an appointment as soon as possible. Even if time is short, last-minute advice is still helpful and some vaccines and malaria tablets can be given just before travel.

If you have any current health problems, discuss your travel plans with your doctor or if appropriate, hospital specialist. Make sure you are well prepared if you need to [carrying medicines abroad](#), especially any prescribed drugs.

If you are pregnant or planning a pregnancy, check [malaria](#) and [Zika](#) risks at your destination - catching these infections in pregnancy puts you and your baby at risk of serious complications. Discuss your travel plans carefully with your practice nurse, GP, pharmacist or a travel clinic, and if appropriate, your midwife or specialist doctor.

See our [pregnancy factsheet](#), [insect spread illness reminder for pregnant travellers](#) and [Zika virus: Evaluating the risk to individual travellers](#) for more advice and information.

Get appropriate [foreign travel health insurance](#) with cover for the whole trip, all your destinations, any medical conditions and planned activities.

Check the [Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office](#) website safety and security information and any travel restrictions at your destination.

### **While you are away**

- avoid [mosquito, insect and tick bites](#) as much as possible
- follow good [food and water hygiene advice](#)
- avoid contact with all animals and be aware of your [rabies risk](#)
- take sensible [personal safety precautions](#), especially around water and while driving, using public transport or taxis
- wash your hands frequently and respect any additional public health measures required by local authorities during the festive season and beyond
- use appropriate [sun protection](#)

If you have symptoms like fever, headache, tiredness, muscle ache, a rash, persistent and/or bloody diarrhea, a lasting cough or any unusual symptoms: get urgent local medical advice - don't wait until you are back in the UK.

### **When you get home**

Get urgent medical attention if you are unwell when you get home. Remember to tell your doctor you have been abroad, including which countries you visited - this is especially important if you visited a country with malaria.

If malaria tablets were recommended for your trip, remember to complete the full course when you get back. If you have a fever and phone NHS 111 for advice, please state that you have returned from a malaria area and need an urgent (same day result) malaria test.

If you visited a Zika risk area while pregnant, see your midwife or GP for advice when you return. This is even if you feel completely well and have not had any symptoms, as Zika infection can be very mild with no symptoms. They will advise if you need any assessments after your trip.

See the UK Health Security Agency's [Zika virus: advice for women returning from areas with active transmission](#) for more information.

## **Advice for health professionals**

If you are advising UK residents planning to celebrate Diwali abroad, you can check our [Country Information pages](#) for vaccine recommendations and destination-specific risk advice.

If you suspect a case of an insect spread infection in a returned traveller, you should discuss this urgently with their local microbiology, virology or infectious diseases consultant, giving a full travel/clinical history. They may advise that appropriate samples are sent for testing to [specialist laboratory facilities](#) at the [Rare and imported pathogens laboratory \(RIPL\)](#) in the UK.

## **Resources**

- [Living safely with respiratory infections, including COVID-19](#)
- [Mosquito bite avoidance: advice for travellers](#)
- [Rabies risks for travellers](#)
- [Travel health insurance](#)
- [Visiting friends and relatives abroad](#)