Travel Recommendations

Andorra  |  Austria  |  Azores  |  Belgium  |  Canary Islands  |  Denmark  |  Faroe Islands  |
Finland  |  France  |  Germany  |  Gibraltar  |  Greece  |  Greenland  |  Iceland  |
Ireland  |  Italy  |  Liechtenstein  |  Luxembourg  |  Madeira Islands  |  Malta  |  Monaco  |
The Netherlands  |  Norway  |  Portugal  |  San Marino  |  Spain  |  Sweden  |  Switzerland  |
United Kingdom  |  Australia  |  New Zealand

MALARIA RISK

No risk in Western Europe, Australia and New Zealand.

Routine vaccines may be scheduled in the immunization clinic, without a travel clinic appointment. Please review the following information:

Routine Vaccines:
☐ Influenza vaccine (in Australia and New Zealand, season is alternate half of year from US)
☐ Tetanus booster: Tdap or Td
☐ Hepatitis A vaccine
☐ Hepatitis B vaccine
☐ MMR

Personal Safety:
Use the same common sense traveling overseas that you would at home, and always stay alert and aware of your surroundings.

Arrange travel medical insurance that is appropriate for the destination and anticipated activities; include medical evacuation insurance

Keep family and friends informed of your itinerary, and communicate regularly throughout the trip

Enroll in the Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP) at http://travel.state.gov/

Become a member of International Association for Medical Assistance to Travelers (IAMAT) at http://www.iamat.org/

Register your trip with the International Studies Office, if it is for credit or funded by UVA

Accidents and Injuries

Motor vehicle crashes are the #1 killer of healthy US citizens in foreign countries.

Avoid using scooters or motorcycles and wear helmets if you do so

Wear seatbelts in motor vehicles and on public transport, if available

Avoid travel at night and in bad weather conditions

Avoid unsafe travel, such as a quad bike, on the back of a truck, or on the roof of a bus

If planning sport or adventure activities, ensure safety equipment is provided and bring appropriate and well fitting clothing, footwear, and protective eye wear

Know the depth of water and any underwater hazards before diving; diving feet first is advised. Do not dive into shallow water

Pay attention to signs and surf conditions when swimming or undertaking water sports, and use flotation devices or life jackets where necessary

Do not consume alcohol before swimming, cycling, or using a watercraft

Remain in vehicles when travelling through wildlife reserves

Violence and Theft

Avoid travel to areas of conflict or political unrest; avoid participating in local demonstrations

Travel with a companion or group

Stay in secure accommodations and use a safety deposit box

Use only official taxi services
Carry minimal amounts of money; a hidden money belt may be useful for holding passports and larger amounts of money.

Do not wear expensive watches or jewelry.

Dress appropriately with respect to local culture.

Never accept food or drink from strangers, and do not leave drinks unattended because of the risk of “spiking.”

Ensure that hired cars are roadworthy and can be locked securely.

Upload important documents onto a secure website before travel in case of theft.

**Environmental Related Illnesses**

Seek local advice on environmental hazards, including flora, fauna, and weather conditions.

Wear protective clothing, high factor sunscreen (reapplied regularly), and insect repellent (also reapplied as directed).

Carry a first aid kit and know how to use it.

Carry an adequate supply of water and high energy snacks.

Carry a flashlight for walking at night.

Check shoes and clothes carefully for spiders, scorpions, and so on.

Wear a stinger suit when swimming in areas with jellyfish, or use SafeSea Sunblock with Jellyfish Protective Lotion.

Altitude illness usually occurs at about >9000 feet (2700 meters). Symptoms can include headache, lightheadedness, nausea, vomiting, fatigue, loss of appetite; more serious symptoms include breathlessness and confusion. See the UVA Student Health Information Sheet on Altitude Illness for additional advice.

**Alcohol, Drugs and STIs**

Students traveling abroad may adopt higher risk behaviors, such as excessive alcohol use, drug use, and unsafe casual sex.

Such activities are associated with increased incidence of accidents, violence and sexually transmitted illnesses, which can have lifelong consequences.

Consider abstinence or, if sexually active, use latex condoms correctly.

There is a higher baseline risk of HIV in many parts of the world. There is also a greater risk for multidrug resistant infections such as gonorrhea.

Limit alcohol consumption. People take more risks when intoxicated.

Situational tolerance: drinking in a new environment can cause you to become more intoxicated than usual with the same number of drinks.

Some drinks may have a higher alcohol content than what you are used to.

Do not inject/use drugs.

Drug use while abroad (even “soft” drugs, like marijuana) has been associated with acute psychosis in young people.

Do not share needles or any devices that can break the skin. That includes needles for tattoos, piercings, and acupuncture.

**Culture Shock**

Culture shock is the most common type of travel stress, especially during extended travel; it can be overwhelming, but it is normal, and know that it will pass.

Talk to friends, family, or your advisor for support.

Be open-minded, patient, and flexible.

**Travel and Mental Health**

Travel can be extremely stressful. Lack of familiar support systems, unexpected situations, and language barriers can intensify stress.

Travel stress can trigger or exacerbate underlying mental health problems, such as anxiety or depression.

If you have a history of mental health issues, talk to your care provider to discuss if the type of travel you are planning is appropriate for you. It may not be the best time to stop or to adjust medications before your trip. Before traveling, you may need to find a mental health professional at your destination who speaks your language to ensure continuity of care.

**Responsible Travel**

Be informed: educate yourself about a host country’s lifestyles and cultural codes.

Learn some basic phrases.

Respect local customs: the way you dress, behavior at religious sites, public displays of affection.

Avoid exploitation: travelers may be perceived as rich,
so avoid obvious displays of wealth or handing out money as this may build resentment.

Support the local community economically and tip generously, if acceptable. Bargain, if acceptable, but avoid aggressive bargaining, as people’s livelihoods depend on sales.

Avoid and denounce exploitation of locals (low salaries, child prostitution and sex travel).

Protect the environment: reuse towels and bed sheets, avoid overuse of water, wasting food and littering.

**Keep Away from Animals**

Most animals avoid people, but they may attack if they feel threatened, are protecting their young or territory, or if they are injured or ill. Animal bites and scratches can lead to serious diseases such as rabies.

Do not touch or feed any animals you do not know. Do not allow animals to lick open wounds, and do not get animal saliva in your eyes or mouth.

Avoid rodents and their urine and feces.

If you wake in a room with a bat, seek medical care immediately.

Rabies vaccine may still be required after a possible rabies exposure, regardless of previous rabies shots. Seek medical evaluation as soon as possible.

The risk of bird flu to travelers is extremely low. People who come in contact with live poultry may be at higher risk. Avoid live bird or poultry markets.

**Insect Borne Diseases**

Bugs (including mosquitoes, ticks, and some flies) can spread a variety of diseases, such as tickborne encephalitis. A vaccine for tickborne encephalitis is available in Europe, but not in the US. You can reduce your risk by taking steps to prevent bug bites.

**Tickborne Encephalitis**

Spread by tick bites, occasionally by unpasteurized dairy products

Risk present only in small areas in many countries

Most cases occur:

- in forested areas
- in areas with <2,500 ft. (750 m) elevation
- from April through November; peaks in early and late summer

Higher risk: outdoor activities (such as camping, hiking, fishing, bicycling) and outdoor occupations (such as forestry, military training)

To reduce risk:

- Avoid bug bites
- Avoid unpasteurized dairy products

**Avoid Bug Bites**

An insect repellent with at least 20% DEET, applied to exposed skin, can protect against mosquitoes, ticks, and other bugs.

Insect repellents with the following active ingredients protect against mosquitoes (but not always against other insects): 20% Picaridin, Oil of lemon eucalyptus/PMD or IR3525.

Make sure to read directions and reapply as directed to maintain effectiveness. Repellents containing a higher percentage of the active ingredient typically provide longer-lasting protection. Regardless of what product you use, if you start to get mosquito bites, reapply the repellent according to the label instructions.

When using sunscreen, apply sunscreen first and insect repellent second. Combined sunscreen/insect repellents products are not recommended

**Permethrin** insecticide: you can buy items already treated with permethrin or can treat them yourself (such as boots, pants, socks, and tents). Do not use permethrin directly on skin.

Cover exposed skin by wearing long-sleeved shirts, long pants, and hats.

Stay and sleep in screened or air-conditioned rooms.

To prevent tick bites, tuck in shirts, tuck pants into socks, and wear closed shoes instead of sandals.

See General Travel Advice for more information on personal safety and security, food and water precautions, malaria and how to avoid bug bites.

**For the Most Up To Date Information:**

**Centers for Disease Control Travelers’ Health:**
http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/

**State Department (Travel Alerts and Warnings):**
http://travel.state.gov/

**Travel Registration with Embassies:** https://step.state.gov/step/