UNIVERSITY STUDENT HEALTH SERVICES • Fact Sheet

TRAVEL MEDICATIONS

MALARIA PREVENTION:

■ Medications
All malaria prevention medications have side effects. Some have restrictions based on your medical history. It is important to read the package insert prior to starting these medicines.

1. Aralen (Chloroquine) and Lariam (Mefloquine)
   - These medications are taken once weekly, starting one week before arrival in a malaria-risk area and continued for 4 weeks after leaving the malaria-risk area.
2. Malarone (Atovaquone/Proguanil) and Primaquine (Aminoquinoline)
   - These medications are taken daily, starting 2 days before arrival in a malaria-risk area and continued for 7 days after leaving the malaria-risk area.
   - Testing for G6PD deficiency must be completed before Primaquine can be prescribed.
3. Doxycycline
   - This medication is taken daily, starting 2 days before arrival in a malaria-risk area and continued for 30 days after leaving the malaria-risk area.
   - Because doxycycline increases the risk of sunburn, sunscreen with a minimum SPF of 40 should be used while taking this medication.

■ Insect Repellents
   - Permethrin should be applied to clothing prior to departure.
   - Insect repellents containing DEET or Picardin should be applied to your skin every 4 to 8 hours (depending on the manufacturer guidelines) while in a mosquito-risk area.

■ Blood Donation
   - You may not donate any blood products for 1 year after travel to a malaria-risk area.

TREATMENT OF TRAVELERS’ DIARRHEA:
Please read the guidelines in our “Travelers’ Diarrhea” handout.

■ Fluid Replacement
   - Preventing dehydration with a World Health Organization approved Oral Rehydration Salt (ORS) is the standard of care.
   - Pedialyte is an example of an approved ORS product.

■ Medications
1. Antibiotics are used for the treatment of travelers’ diarrhea. They should not be used to prevent traveler’s diarrhea.
   - Cipro (Ciprofloxacin) 500mg or Norflox (Norfloxacin) 400mg taken twice daily for 3 days are the preferred medications for treatment of travelers’ diarrhea.
     - These medications cannot be taken during pregnancy.
     - This class of drugs may provoke a partial tear of a tendon, especially the Achilles tendon on your heel. Avoid strenuous activities while taking these medications.
   - Zithromax (Azithromycin) 500mg taken once daily for 3 days or 1000mg once is preferred for travel to Southeast Asia.
     - Taking Zithromax with a small meal can reduce the chance of developing stomach upset.
   - Xifaxan (Rifaximin) 200mg taken 3 times daily for 3 days is a newer option but is much more expensive.
2. Bismuth (Pepto-Bismol, Kapectate) cannot be used if you are taking aspirin or if you are allergic to aspirin.
3. Imodium (Loperamide) may be used to decrease diarrhea and the risks of dehydration. Do not take Imodium if you have bloody diarrhea or fever.
ALTITUDE SICKNESS:
1. **Diamox** 125mg to 250mg is taken every 12 hours, starting 24 hours before your ascent and continuing for 2 to 3 days after your ascent.
   - The maximum daily dose is 500mg to 1000mg. The higher dose is reserved for rapid ascent to very high altitudes.
2. A diet high in carbohydrates and non-caffeinated fluids may reduce altitude sickness if started 48 to 72 hours before an ascent.
3. Avoid or reduce alcohol intake for 48 hours before an ascent.
4. Maintain your usual caffeine intake.

RABIES:
- Rabies vaccination is reserved for selected destinations and activities.
- Start rabies vaccination immediately for any risky animal encounter involving dogs, bats, or primates.

SELECTED OVER-THE-COUNTER MEDICATIONS, SUNSCREENS, & INSECT REPELLENTS:
It is best to leave medications in their original packaging to prevent confusion later. Loose pills may also be confiscated at Customs.

**GI Meds**
- **Imodium** (Loperamide) can be used to treat watery diarrhea and reduce the risks of dehydration. Do not take Imodium if you have bloody diarrhea or fever.
- **Pepto-Bismol or Kapectate (Bismuth)** can be taken to prevent or treat travelers’ diarrhea. Do not use Bismuth with aspirin or if you are allergic to aspirin.
- **Zantac (Ranitidine), Pepcid (Famotidine), or Prilosec (Omeprazole)** can be used to treat heartburn and gastritis.
- **Maalox, Gaviscon, TUMS, and Mylanta** are also helpful with stomach upset and heartburn.

**Antihistamines**
- These medications are used to treat allergic reactions to medicines, insect bites, foods, molds, plants, and other allergens. They will also treat seasonal allergy symptoms.
  - **Benadryl** (Diphenhydramine) is effective but can cause drowsiness.
  - **Claritin** (Loratadine), **Zyrtec** (Cetirizine), and **Allegra** (Fexofenadine) do not usually cause drowsiness and can be taken once daily.

**Tylenol**
- **Tylenol** (Acetaminophen) can be used to treat headache, fever, muscle pain, and joint pain. Talk to your healthcare provider before using Tylenol products if you have liver disease.

**Advil & Aleve**
- **Advil** (Ibuprofen or Motrin) & **Aleve** (Naprosyn) can be used to treat fever, headache, muscle pain, and joint pain. Take these medications with food to avoid stomach upset. Do not use these drugs if you are allergic to aspirin, if you have a history of bleeding from the stomach, or if you have kidney disease.

**Aspirin**
- Aspirin or ibuprofen may be substituted for Diamox to prevent headaches when ascending to moderate altitudes (less than 3500m).

**Medicated Creams**
- **Hydrocortisone 1% cream** can be used twice daily to treating itchy insect bites or allergic skin reactions.
- **Miconazole 2% cream** can be used twice daily to treat fungal infections of the skin.

**Sunscreens**
- Sunscreen with **SPF 40** that binds to the skin immediately upon application is preferred. Recommended brands include **Bull Frog** and **Water Babies**.

**Insect Repellents**
- Insect repellents with **25% to 35% DEET** are preferred. They should be applied every 6 to 8 hours. Recommended products include **Repel**, **Cutter**, **Sawyer**, and **Deep Woods Off**.
  - **Picaridin** is the preferred Non-DEET insect repellent. Non-DEET repellents should be applied every 4 to 6 hours. Examples include **Cutter Advanced and Bull Frog**. IR 3535 (Picaridin) products are found in Europe.
  - **Lemon eucalyptus and soy plant products** have variable effectiveness. Examples include **Repel Lemon Eucalyptus and Bite Blocker**. These products are sticky and sting over cuts. **Citronella** products are not recommended.
  - **Permethrin** is applied to clothing prior to departure. It will stain rayon and silk fabrics. **Sawyer** makes a good permethrin product.