

PLU Health Center Travel Preparations

The following are some general guidelines that should be followed before leaving for your study away program. Specific details and requirements can be discussed with your provider at your travel consultation at the Health Center. To make an appointment, please call (253) 535-7337. When you make your appointment, let us know where you are going, please bring your detailed itinerary and your immunization record.

Immunizations

All students should have already had 2 MMR shots or documented immunity, it is also recommended that you have:

- Hepatitis B
- Hepatitis A
- Meningococcal if staying in dorms
- Rabies if will have contact with bats, other wild animals.
- Seasonal Flu vaccine

As well as these routine vaccines:

MMR, Tetanus, Polio, Varicella (Chickenpox), Pneumococcal for those with asthma/diabetes/smokers/etc

Travelers Diarrhea

When traveling abroad, it is common to experience travelers diarrhea, here are some tips to help minimize your chances:

- Drink bottled water/no ice in drinks,
- Eat cooked or peeled fruits/vegetables, no cold salads
- Avoid unpasteurized goat cheese and other unpasteurized dairy products

If you get traveler's diarrhea, it's important to stay hydrated. Drink bottled water, use electrolyte tablets such as Gatorade, and over-the-counter medicine such as Immodium. Smart travelers bring these from home. Consider carrying prescription medication with you to treat yourself if you have severe diarrhea. You can discuss this at your travel consultation appointment with the Health Center.

Remember, seek medical attention if you have blood in stool, fever, or signs of dehydration (more than 6 hours since last peed, feeling lethargic).

Prevention of insect bites

Insect bites can transmit some diseases, including malaria. Take precautions! Use insect repellent with DEET or Picaridin as the active ingredient. First apply sunblock, then 30 minutes later put on insect repellent. Re-apply both frequently throughout the day. you can also treat clothing with permethrin, and wearing long loose sleeves, long loose pants add protection.

If you are going to be in a malaria prone area, sleep under bed nets. Also, avoid sitting directly on sand and dirt and don't go barefoot. This will prevent diseases such as Dengue fever and leishmaniasis. To

avoid schistosomiasis, caused by larvae, don't swim in fresh water. If that is unavoidable shower immediately afterwards and rub briskly with a towel.

Malaria

Malaria can be avoided through the prevention of insect bites (see above). There are medications to prevent developing disease, all of which need to be taken on different schedules, may have different side effects, and have different costs. Talk about these options during your travel consult at the Health Center.

Other Considerations

Tuberculosis rates are higher abroad than in U.S. Avoid crowded public places and public transit when possible. If staying longer than a month have a TB skin test prior to departure and consider having TB skin test about 10 weeks after return. If you develop cough, fever, or night sweats, see a medical professional sooner.

HIV/AIDS transmission can occur with sexual activity and contact with blood. Condom use decreases risk, and they are free at the Health Center. Condoms decrease the risk for other sexually transmitted diseases as well. Consider taking some along. Also, do not use drugs and do not share needles.

Altitude sickness

Depending on where you're heading, altitude sickness can be a real possibility. Medication is available to help prevent symptoms. Signs of altitude sickness can include: fatigue, headache, shortness of breath, cough, behavior changes. If you start to experience any of these, remember DON'T BE A HERO, you need to descend.

Tips for safe and healthy travel

Make a copy of passport and carry it separate from passport.

Leave copies of front/back of credit cards with trusted family or friend at home in U.S.

Be aware of surroundings, check with locals about good/bad areas, travel in groups

If there is a seat belt, wear it!

Avoid traveling on rural roads after dark

Bring and use hand sanitizer

Bring the card from Wang Center with insurance info: that's the number to call!

If you are taking a prescription medication, bring more than you need with you from home

At follow-up we will review your individual immunization and medical history and determine what vaccines and medications will be best for you.

Check out the following websites for more information about healthy and safe travel!

- <https://travelregistration.state.gov/ibrs/ui>
- <https://studentsabroad.state.gov>
- www.plu.edu/health-center

