



Developed Countries (reviewed Feb 2010)

see also Australian consular advice: www.smartraveller.gov.au/zw-cgi/view/Advice/

For most areas of these countries, you should observe health precautions similar to those that would apply while travelling in Australia.

Criminals frequent tourist attractions such as museums, monuments, restaurants, hotels, beaches, trains, train stations, airports and subways. Travellers should be especially wary in train stations and subways where confidence tricksters and gangs of thieves operate. (see Australian consular advice: www.smartraveller.gov.au/zw-cgi/view/Advice/)

Travellers' diarrhoea is the number one illness in travellers. Make sure your food and drinking water are safe. Discuss taking a medical kit with your doctor. Consider a dental and medical checkup prior to departure.

Vaccine Recommendations: It is advisable to see your doctor at least 4–6 weeks before your trip to allow time for shots to take effect.

- Update your routine vaccinations - Diphtheria, Whooping Cough and Polio occur in many countries that do not have a well developed immunisation program.
- Influenza vaccine - Always worthwhile
- Hepatitis A vaccination. You are not at increased risk in Northern and Western Europe, but there is some risk in Southern Europe and the countries bordering the Mediterranean, as well as Portugal.
- Hepatitis B vaccine is now recommended for all adults even in Australia and has become a routine vaccination in children.
- Consider Rabies vaccination if cycling around Europe or other at risk activity including cave exploration (bat urine risk) & animal handling.

All Travellers should take the following precautions, no matter the destination:

- Wash hands often with soap and water.
- Because motor vehicle crashes are a leading cause of injury among travellers, walk and drive defensively. Avoid travel at night if possible and always use seat belts.
- Don't eat or drink dairy products unless you know they have been pasteurized.
- Never eat undercooked ground beef and poultry, raw eggs. Raw shellfish is particularly dangerous to persons who have liver disease

or compromised immune systems.

- To reduce any risk of acquiring Mad Cow Disease virus (BSE - vCJD) from food, travellers to Europe should consider selecting solid pieces of muscle meat (rather than brains or beef products such as burgers and sausages) Milk and milk products from cows are not believed to pose any risk for transmitting the BSE agent
- Tick borne encephalitis, a viral infection of the central nervous system, occurs chiefly in Central and Western Europe and parts of America. Travellers are at risk who visit or work in forested areas during the summer months. To prevent tick borne encephalitis, as well as Lyme disease, travellers should take precautions to prevent tick bites.

Management of diarrhoea:

- Bottled or canned beverages (eg carbonated mineral water), tea, broth & foods such as rice, bananas, potatoes and dry biscuits are tolerated best. Take gastrolyte sachets for children. When diarrhoea is prolonged and with fever seek medical attention
- **Antimotility drugs ('stoppers'):** eg. Imodium (loperamide) Do not use if high fever or blood in motions. Do not use in children under 6, and be cautious in children under 12.
 - **Antibiotics.** Diarrhoea with high fever, severe abdominal pains & smelly motions Norfloxacin 800mg or Azithromycin 1 Gm). Nb Safe for children >12 months and in pregnancy.

Prolonged diarrhoea greater than 10 days and without fever: A bowel parasite "giardiasis" is the commonest cause. Usually treated with tinidazole (Fasigyn) - (2g) in a single dose

Medical Examination after travel: It is advisable to see your GP (if not essential) if you

- experience illness in the weeks following your return home, particularly if fever, persistent diarrhoea, vomiting, urinary disorders, skin disease or genital infection occurs;
- consider that you have been exposed to a serious infectious disease while travelling;

This leaflet cannot be completely comprehensive and is intended as a guide only The information may change in the future. Visit relevant website for updates. If you have further questions you should raise them with your own doctor. **NEVDGP Website:** <http://www.nevdgp.org.au/info/travel>