



Bali Resorts (reviewed Dec 2008)

Bali is probably the most popular overseas travel destination for Australians of all ages. Studies have shown that illness occurs in between 15 - 55% of all travellers with 11% requiring to see a doctor whilst away. The phrase "Travel broadens the mind and loosens the bowels." is apt but it should also be remembered that less common serious diseases do occur, which can completely ruin ones holiday and even be life threatening. Remember that ultimately, your health is your responsibility. Many coastal resorts such as Kutu and large hotels have a high standard of sanitation and safe water supply, but remember that most people working in them and handling the food do not always have the same standards.

TRAVELLERS DIARRHOEA

Most episodes of diarrhoea are short-lived and require no particular treatment. The need to treat diarrhoea depends on either its severity or persistence. Transmission is mostly via contaminated food or water.

- Choose food which is freshly and thoroughly cooked and served stemming hot
- Eat fruit or vegetables that you can peel or cut open yourself, eg. banana, citrus fruits, papaya.
- Dry foods and Breads are generally safe.
- Canned and bottled drinks are safe.

Dangers

- Avoid milk, ice cream and other milk products unless made with pasteurised (or boiled) milk.
- Avoid sauces, mousses, mayonnaise.
- Avoid smorgasbord even in 5 star restaurants (reheated foods & food sitting at room temperature)
- Avoid prawns, oysters, fish, unless thoroughly cooked.
- Avoid uncooked leafy vegetables, eg. in salads.
- Ice is only as safe as the water it is made from.

Treatment

Because diarrhoea is so common it is important to be aware of how to manage it if prevention fails.

Fluids

Most travellers do not develop dehydrating diarrhoea; almost any beverage coupled with a source of salt (eg., salted crackers) suffices for hydrating most ill travellers. Bottled or canned beverages, tea, broth, foods such as rice, bananas, papaya (papaw), potatoes and dry biscuits are tolerated best.

Management of Diarrhoea

- Antimotility drugs ('stoppers'). Since most diarrhoeal illnesses last only a few days, these drugs may be very helpful in relieving diarrhoea and cramps. Do not use if high fever or blood in motions. Do not use in children under 6, and be cautious in children under 12. Adult Dosage: loperamide (Imodium) -2 capsules (each 2 mg) followed by 1 cap after each unformed stool. (maximum 8 caps per day.)
- Antibiotics. Diarrhoea with high fever, distressing symptoms or blood in motions; A single dose of two Norfloxacin tablets should be effective. If response is not dramatic after 12 hours continue 1 tab twice a day for a further 3 days. Co-trimoxazole & azithromycin syrup can be used in children.)
- Prolonged diarrhoea without fever. A bowel parasite "giardiasis" is the commonest cause. The best treatment is tinidasole (Fasigyn) - 4 tabs single dose

- Prolonged diarrhoea with fever. Seek medical help. **Children with diarrhoea** are of special concern. The younger the child, the more rapidly dehydration can occur. A child's fluid loss is best replaced with an oral rehydration solution (ORS) such as Gastrolyte. Adults travelling with young children should carry ORS sachets with them. or:
 - Lemonade (not low calorie) or fruit juice - 1 part to 4 parts of boiled water.
 - Cordials (not low calorie) - 1 part cordial to 6 parts of boiled water.

MALARIAL RISK

Resort, Urban Areas & Day trips Minimal risk and antimalarial drugs not recommended. The use of insect repellents is recommended, as this will also minimise the risk of other diseases from bites such as Dengue.

Inland Forested areas The benign vivax form of malaria exists and is sensitive to Chloroquine.

Dengue is a **viral** disease producing severe headache, bone & muscle pain, high fever and rash usually occur 4-6 days after an infected bite.

Rabies: Bali was Rabies up until August 2008 (illness is 100% fatal to humans) mostly acquired from dogs, cats & monkeys (even minor scratch, graze or lick). Incubation period 10 days to 10 years

Rabies risk management:

You should wash the wound immediately with soap and water and disinfect with iodine (betadine). Seek medical attention if risk seems high. (unprovoked attack, irritable animal) and have post-exposure vaccine as soon as possible (preferably within 48 hours). Otherwise at least seek medical advice on return. [see Vic gov reference](#)

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Medical Kit: see separate sheet

Heat and Humidity: Plenty of drinks rich in mineral salts (fruit and vegetable juices, clear soups and even a little table salt) are recommended. Daily showering, loose cotton clothing and talcum powder will reduce heat rash. Risk of severe sunburn needs consideration.

Shoewear: Shoes should be examined before use - as snakes & scorpions tend to rest in them. ... Leather goods made from inadequately treated skins may contain anthrax spores causing life threatening skin sores.

Accident Prevention: Traffic accidents are a leading cause of accidents among travellers. Vehicles are often unroadworthy. Unfamiliarity with roads, poor condition of roads and drunk drivers add to the dangers. Kuta beach in Bali is considered a dangerous beach for swimming and on average 6 tourists drown each year.

Travel Insurance: Travel insurance should cover not only medical & hospital expenses but also costs due to general accidents, medical evacuation, loss of luggage & money, as well as delays due to strikes.

Medical Examination after travel: It is advisable (if not essential) to visit your local doctor promptly if you

- develop fever, diarrhoea, vomiting, urinary, genital or skin disorder in the weeks following return
- have had a significant illness whilst away
- have spent a long time abroad

Further Weblink for information

- **Australian Consular advice -**

www.smartraveller.gov.au/zw-cgi/view/Advice/index