



## Travel Immunizations for Adults

If you are going to be travelling, make sure to discuss your travel plans with a public health unit, a travel clinic, or your health care provider at least 6 to 8 weeks before you travel. This is especially important if you live in a rural area where vaccines may not be in supply. There is a charge for most travel vaccines, and in most cases a doctor's fee may be charged.

Bring a record of all vaccines you have received in the past to the travel clinic. Keep a record of the travel vaccines you receive and take this with you on your trip.

### Which immunizations do I need to get if I am planning to travel?

The immunizations you need depend on where you are going, how long you are staying, and how you will be travelling.

The following vaccines are the common immunizations recommended for adult travellers.

#### Polio

Polio is a disease caused by infection with a virus. People get it by eating food or drinking water contaminated with feces. You may require a dose of Inactivated Polio Vaccine (IPV) if you are going to areas where polio is present and you have not been vaccinated before, or if you have not had a one-time booster against polio. For more information see [HealthLinkBC File #13 Polio Vaccine \(IPV\)](#).

#### Hepatitis A

Hepatitis A is a disease caused by infection of the liver with the hepatitis A virus. People get it by eating contaminated food or drinking water. One dose of hepatitis A vaccine can provide good short-term protection. A second dose of vaccine should be given later for life-time protection. A combined vaccine against hepatitis A and B is

also available. For more information see [HealthLinkBC File #33 Hepatitis A Vaccine](#).

#### Typhoid Fever

Typhoid Fever is a serious and life-threatening infection caused by typhoid bacteria. People get it by eating food or drinking water contaminated with feces.

There are 2 types of typhoid vaccine - oral (by mouth) and injection (by needle). The oral vaccine is given as a series of capsules to be taken at home. The injection vaccine is only 1 dose, given at the travel clinic. For more information see [HealthLinkBC File #41j Typhoid Vaccine](#).

#### Traveller's Diarrhea and Cholera

Traveller's diarrhea and cholera are caused by 2 different types of bacteria. People get these by eating contaminated food or drinking water. Cholera infection can be life-threatening if severe and not treated. There are 2 types of oral vaccine - liquid and capsule. The vaccine is given as a series of doses to be mixed in water taken at home. For more information see [HealthLinkBC File #41k Traveller's Diarrhea and Cholera Vaccine](#).

#### Influenza

Influenza, or the flu, is an infection of the nose, throat and lungs caused by the influenza virus. Influenza spreads easily from person to person through coughing, sneezing, or having close face-to-face contact. The vaccine is recommended if you plan to travel during the flu season. Flu season usually runs from November to April in the Northern hemisphere, from April to October in the Southern hemisphere, and year-round in tropical regions. One dose of the vaccine is usually given to adults. Sometimes 2 doses are given to children. For more information see

[HealthLinkBC File #12d Inactivated Influenza \(Flu\) Vaccine.](#)

### **Hepatitis B**

Hepatitis B is a disease caused by infection of the liver with the hepatitis B virus. It is spread by unprotected sexual intercourse, needle sharing, or rarely by infected blood products.

Hepatitis B can cause permanent liver damage. It is also the main cause of liver cancer, which can be fatal. The vaccine is recommended if you are visiting a country where hepatitis B is common and if you are staying 6 months or longer, or if you are expecting to have sexual relations or blood contact with local residents regardless of your length of stay. The vaccine is given as a series of 2 or 3 doses. A combined vaccine against hepatitis A and B is available. For more information see [HealthLinkBC File #25a Hepatitis B Vaccine.](#)

### **Japanese Encephalitis**

Japanese encephalitis is a serious and life-threatening infection caused by a virus. It is spread by the bite of infected mosquitoes. The vaccine is sometimes recommended for travellers to rural areas of some Asian countries. It is given as a series of 2 doses or shots 28 days apart. For more information see [HealthLinkBC File #41h Japanese Encephalitis Vaccine.](#)

### **Meningococcal Infection**

Meningococcal infection is a serious and life-threatening infection caused by meningococcal bacteria. Infection is spread from one person to another by coughing, sneezing or close face-to-face contact. It can also be spread through saliva or spit when people share things like food and drinks.

The vaccine is recommended for travellers who have close contact with local residents in areas where epidemics are common. These areas may change, but commonly include parts of Africa and the Middle East. Vaccination is required for travellers to Mecca (for the annual "Haj"), 10

days prior to entry to Saudi Arabia. For more information see [HealthLinkBC File #23a Meningococcal C Conjugate \(Men-C\) Vaccine](#) and [HealthLinkBC File #23b Meningococcal Quadrivalent Vaccines.](#)

### **Rabies**

Rabies is an infection of the brain caused by a virus that is spread through the bite or scratch of an infected animal. Vaccination is recommended for travellers at risk of exposure to rabies and for visitors staying 1 month or longer in areas with a high risk of rabies, such as parts of Latin America, South East Asia, India and Africa. Travelling children are especially at risk due to their tendency to touch or play with wild or stray animals. For more information see [HealthLinkBC File #07a Rabies.](#)

### **Yellow Fever**

Yellow Fever is a serious and life-threatening infection caused by a virus. It is spread by the bite of infected mosquitoes. It is present in tropical areas of Africa, Central and South America.

The vaccine is given in 1 dose and must be taken at least 10 days before you travel to a tropical area. At the travel clinic, you will receive a stamped document called the International Certificate of Vaccination Against Yellow Fever. This document is an official record and a legal requirement for entry into some countries. For more information see [HealthLinkBC File #41i Yellow Fever Vaccine.](#)

### **For More Information**

For a list of travel vaccines that you should consider when travelling to a particular country, visit the Public Health Agency of Canada [www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/travel-health/where-you-travelling.html](http://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/travel-health/where-you-travelling.html).