



Travel Information Leaflet

CONTENTS

- Food and Water Precautions
- Treatment of Travellers' Diarrhoea
- Bite Prevention
- Information on Blood Borne Infections
- Travel Related Deep Vein Thrombosis
- Coping with Jet Lag
- Safety Aspects
- Travel Incident reporting

Food and Water Precautions

Many illnesses, including travellers' diarrhoea, Hepatitis A, Typhoid and Cholera are passed on through contaminated food and/or water.

General Rules:

- There are some general 'rules' of food and water precautions. While it may not be practical to follow all of these rules all of the time, applying them will reduce the risk of travellers' diarrhoea.
- Personal hygiene when eating and drinking is very important. Wash hands prior to handling food, eating and always after using the toilet. Hand washing facilities may be poor or not available when travelling, therefore it is advisable to carry sanitising gel or hand wipes at all times.
- Ensure that clean dishes, cups and utensils are used.
- If using street vendors choose food that is freshly cooked to a high temperature and served immediately while still hot.

Food Precautions:

- Cheese and ice-cream are often made from unpasteurised milk and when in doubt, these should only be bought from larger, well established retailers where quality can usually be assured.
- Meat should be freshly prepared, thoroughly cooked and eaten hot.
- Avoid food that may have been exposed to the air for a significant length of time.
- Green salads should be avoided as these are easily contaminated by soil or flies and are difficult to clean.
- Fish and shellfish can be hazardous at certain times of the year, even if well cooked.
- Take local advice about seafood but when in doubt it is best to avoid.
- Vegetables should be thoroughly cooked.
- Fresh fruits or vegetables should be peeled as the skin can be contaminated by flies and insects.

Water:

Water should only be drunk when you are sure of its purity. Do not drink unsafe water without boiling, chemical purification or using a reliable filter.

This applies to water used for making ice cubes and cleaning the teeth.

Bottled water is usually safe, as are hot tea and coffee, beer and wine.

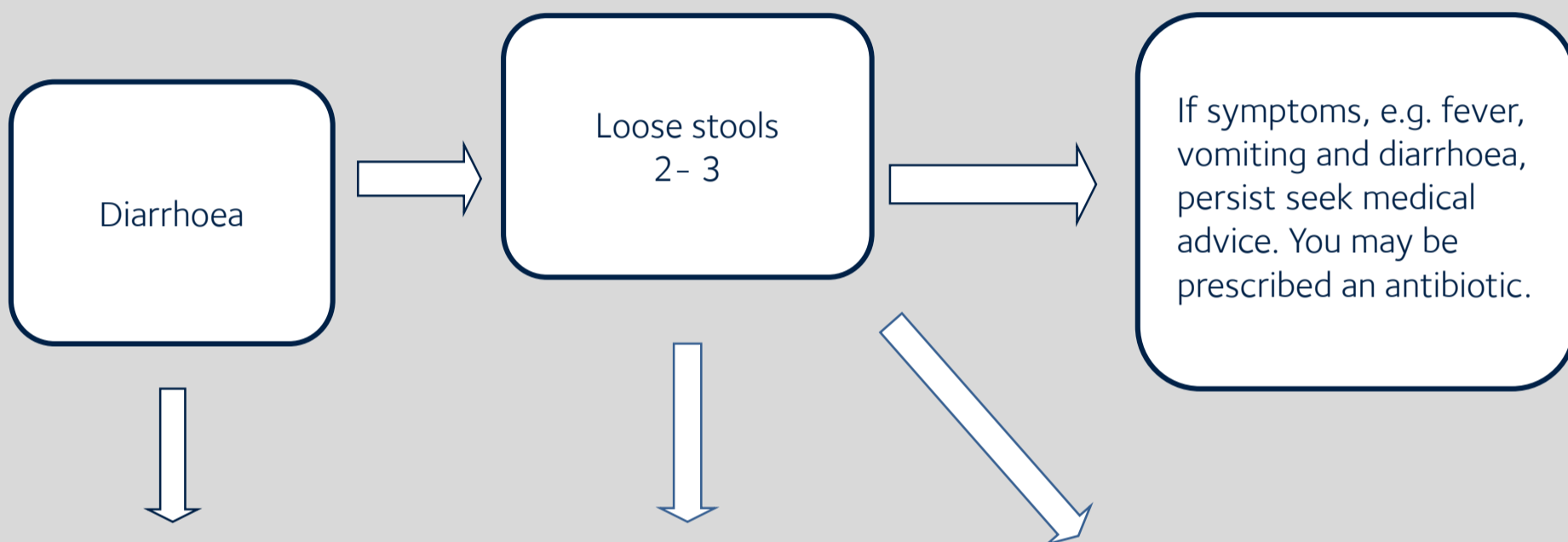
Milk should be boiled unless you are sure that it has been pasteurised.

**Boil it, cook it,
peel it or forget it!**

What should I do if I have Travellers' Diarrhoea

If appropriate, during your appointment Occupational Health may discuss the types of medication available to treat traveller's diarrhoea. The following guidance will help you decide which medication you might consider.

Report all incidents of traveller's diarrhoea to OHS on your return to UK



Remember loose motions can simply result from changes in diet including spiced or fatty foods rather than infection. Maintain hydration by drinking plenty of safe clear fluids e.g. bottled or boiled water, diluted fruit juice or tea.

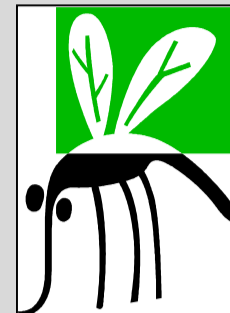
Dioralyte
In all cases of diarrhoea the most important aspect of management is to avoid dehydration by drinking your oral rehydration powders reconstituted in safe bottled or boiled water EXACTLY as directed on the packet

Loperamide may be considered if frequent diarrhoea is inconvenient e.g. travelling, business meetings or if you have colicky abdominal pains. It should not be used if you have a fever or bloody diarrhoea. Seek medical advice if uncertain.

As improvement occurs, bland foods, for example bread, cereals, potatoes, soup, bananas, chicken, should be introduced as tolerated. Milk-containing products should be avoided for several days after recovery.

If you experience frequent vomiting, fever, pain, bleeding or dehydration do not delay contacting medical assistance as you may require an assessment by a Doctor for further treatment.

Bite Prevention



- Many serious tropical diseases are spread by insects. Some examples are Malaria, Yellow Fever, Japanese Encephalitis, Dengue Fever, West Nile Virus, Zika and Leishmaniasis.
- Mosquitoes are attracted by carbon dioxide, heat, smells and movement. Day-biting mosquitoes can carry Yellow Fever and Dengue Fever, night-biting mosquitoes may carry Malaria and Japanese Encephalitis.
- Ticks usually live in long grassy areas and attach themselves to the clothing of a human when they brush past. They crawl up the clothing until they find an area of exposed skin where they can attach.
- Sand flies, the carriers of Leishmaniasis are most active between dusk and dawn. They will, however, bite during the day if they are disturbed.
- Tsetse flies spread Sleeping Sickness (African Trypanosomiasis) and live in the dense vegetation and savannah areas in sub-Saharan Africa. They are attracted to dark, contrasting colours, particularly blue, and bite during the day.

For some of the diseases such as Dengue Fever, avoiding bites is the only way to prevent infection

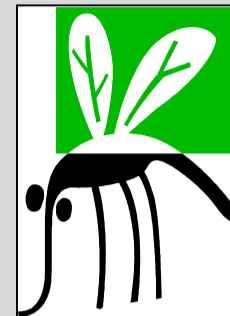
Avoidance of Insect Bites

Insect bites can be reduced by trying to avoid highly infested areas. Many types of mosquitoes bite between dusk and dawn, so being indoors during these hours can reduce the number of bites. Tsetse flies are less affected by repellents and can bite through tight fitting or loose-knit clothing, so wearing loose-fitting, thick clothing and avoiding infested areas are the best methods of protection.

During your appointment in OH if appropriate you will be given advice on the most appropriate type of insect repellent to prevent mosquito bites. It is very important to use the repellent day and night to protect yourself.

Rabies immunisation may be recommended by OH dependent on risk assessment. It is advisable to stay away from animals during your trip especially if they look sick or injured. If you have been bitten by any animal while travelling you need to take this seriously because of the risk of contracting rabies. Firstly wash the wound with soap and water and contact medical assistance as soon as possible for advice on treatment. Report all incidents as per University process on return to the UK.

Insect Bite Prevention



Insect Repellent

- There are many types of repellent. But evidence shows that products containing 50% of the chemical DEET are the most effective (Jungle Formula). It is very safe when used according to the manufacturer's instructions.
- Repellents need to be reapplied at regular intervals, especially after swimming and in hot, humid countries, when they can be removed by sweating. Sunscreen should be applied first and then repellent.
- Don't spray directly onto your face. Avoid contact with lips and eyes.
- Use only on exposed skin. Don't apply to cuts, abrasions, broken or irritated skin.
- Wash hands after application. Wash off the repellent with soap and water when it is no longer needed.
- Sunscreen containing repellent should be avoided as it may encourage excessive use of DEET.
- Alternative repellents using synthetic compounds, such as picaridin (Autan®) and natural ingredients such as lemon eucalyptus oil (Mosi-guard®) are available for those who prefer not to use DEET products. The manufacturer's instructions should be followed when applying these products to babies and infants.

Clothing

- When travelling in areas with malaria, wear loose-fitting long trousers and long sleeves in the evenings, as the mosquitoes that carry malaria are most active at this time.
- Mosquitoes can bite through tight clothing, so wear loose fitting clothing.
- When in tick infested areas avoid shorts and tuck your trousers into your socks to prevent ticks from crawling up your legs.

Remember it is very important to report any symptoms of fever during an overseas trip or after returning home as it may be the symptoms of malaria or other bite related fever which may not be immediately apparent on return to the UK.

Risk Assessment Process

MEDICAL ASSISTANCE:

The University has insurance arrangements that can be used by those travelling abroad on University business, including undertaking research.

To find out what assistance is available for medical insurance cover contact:

www.admin.ox.ac.uk/finance/insurance/travel

Ensure that your level of insurance cover is adequate for the countries to be visited including the cost of repatriation if required.

Insurance cover is conditional upon the traveller complying with the relevant University policies.

The Foreign and Commonwealth Office website (www.fco.gov.uk/travel) carries up-to-date travel advice. It should be used as the basis for informing all those travelling on University business of the risks that they might face in addition to the OH appointment.

Many staff and students travel and work overseas in the course of University business.

The risks to health and safety that arise from overseas work can be:

- work related (e.g. physical risks from the fieldwork itself)
- health related (e.g. exposure to tropical diseases)
- related to personal security (e.g. associated with local criminal or political activity, or civil unrest)

Information on the risk assessment process is available on the University Safety Office web page:

www.admin.ox.ac.uk/safety/policystatements

Policy : UPS S5/07

Information on health risk for travels can be found on the University Occupational health web page www.admin.ox.ac.uk/uohs/

Reducing the Risk of Blood Borne Infection

Information:

- HIV, Hepatitis B, Hepatitis C and other infections can be passed on through unprotected sex with an infected person or by contact with infected blood or body fluids.

Advice For Travellers:

- Unprotected sexual intercourse is very risky. Condoms provide good but not complete protection.
- Consider having a dental check up if you have not had one recently. This will avoid the need for treatment abroad.
- Skin-damaging procedures such as ear piercing, tattooing, acupuncture, manicure and shaving with open razors should be avoided.
- If you have been exposed to any body fluids or have concerns contact medical assistance for advice immediately.

Carrying a medical kit

- Depending on where you are going, you may be advised to take an emergency medical travel kit. This pack contains sterilised medical equipment, such as syringes and needles. Therefore this pack can not be taken as hand luggage.
- Carrying a medical kit is not usually advised for business travel due to the availability of adequate medical care in most travel destinations.
- If you are extending your university trip and travelling on personal holiday the kits are widely available from pharmacies and specialist travel clinics.



Travel Related Deep Vein Thrombosis (DVT)

DVT is a term used to describe the formation of a clot, or thrombus, in one of the deep veins, usually in the lower leg.

DVT can occur as a result of prolonged periods of immobility during air travel and also during prolonged bus, train and car journeys. If you have any predisposing factors this will be discussed during your appointment in OH and specific advice given. Aggravating factors could be pressure from the edge of seats on the back of the leg, dehydration caused by caffeine, alcohol or sleeping medications that encourage immobility.

Signs and Symptoms:

In some cases of DVT there may be no symptoms but possible symptoms can include:

- Pain swelling and tenderness in one of your legs (usually your calf).
- A heavy ache in the affected area.
- Skin warm to touch in the area of the clot.
- Redness of your skin, particularly at the back of your leg below the knee.
- If DVT is not treated a pulmonary embolism (a blood clot that has come away from its original site and become lodged in one of your lungs) may occur. Sudden onset of shortness of breath and chest pain when you breathe in are the most common clinical features.

Prevention of DVT:

- Drink plenty of water.
- Avoid excessive alcohol as it can lead to dehydration.
- Avoid taking sleeping pills as it can cause immobility.
- Perform simple leg exercises, such as regularly flexing your ankles for the duration of your journey.
- Take occasional short walks when possible.
- Take advantage of refuelling stopovers where it may be possible to get out and walk about.

If you suspect during your travel that you have developed any characteristic symptoms of DVT seek medical advice via your GP or A&E as soon as possible.
Report incident to Occupational Health.

Coping with Jetlag



Before you travel:

- Change your sleep routine - try and change your sleeping routine a few days before you are due to travel. If you are travelling east, try going to bed an hour earlier than your usual time. If you are travelling west, try going to bed an hour later.
- Get enough sleep - it is important that you get enough sleep before you are due to travel. Flying when you have not had enough sleep can make jet lag worse.
- Keep calm - airports can sometimes be stressful situations. Try and keep as calm and relaxed as possible because being stressed can make jet lag worse.

During the flight:

- Drink plenty of fluids - make sure that you drink plenty of fluids during your flight. Ensure that you are well hydrated before and after your flight.
- Avoid alcohol - avoid drinking alcohol because it can make symptoms of jet lag worse.
- Keep active - make sure that you keep active if you are flying long distances. Walk around the cabin occasionally, and regularly stretch your arms and legs when you are sitting down.
- Change your watch - when you board the plane, you may find it helpful to adjust your watch so that it matches the time zone of your destination. This will help you to adjust more quickly to your new time zone.
- Get some sleep - if it is night time at your destination while you are on your flight, try and get some sleep. Some people find using ear plugs, noise cancelling headphones or eye masks, helpful.

When you arrive:

- Get into your new routine - try to get used to your new routine as soon as possible. This means eating meals and sleeping at the correct times for your new time zone, and not the time you would normally be eating and sleeping back home.
- Avoid napping - try not to nap as soon as you arrive at your new destination. You may be tired from a long flight, but try to stay active until it is the correct time for you to sleep. This will help your body adjust more quickly.
- Spend time outdoors - try to spend as much time outdoors as you can. Natural light is a very effective way of getting your body to adjust to a new routine.

If you need any additional Information in relation to Travel Health please visit the NathNac or NHS Fit for Travel web pages, alternately contact the Occupational Health Department www.admin.ox.ac.uk/uohs/.

Other Safety Aspects to Consider



Ergonomics:

- Following good ergonomic practices will help to prevent developing musculoskeletal issues or aggravating pre-existing health issues
- It is important to pack in a way that will reduce the need to carry heavy or bulky items.
- Use a wheelie bag to carry hand luggage (less than 10 kg).
- Keep electronic copies of documents on a USB stick to reduce the need to carry paper documents, or email paper documents in advance to be printed at a later date.
- Only lift what you can easily manage.
- Use a docking station if possible or a laptop stand with a separate keyboard and mouse.
- Try to maintain correct sitting posture at all times.
- Always take regular frequent posture breaks.
- Use a speaker phone or headphones for prolonged calls.

Sun and Heat Precautions:

- Wear light coloured heat reflective clothing
- Wear sun screen at least SPF30
- Wear a large brimmed hat
- Wear sunglasses
- Drink fluids to avoid dehydration
- Stay in air conditioned buildings
- Avoid excess of alcohol and/or caffeine

Pregnancy and travel.
If you are pregnant and it is essential for you to undertake overseas business travel, make sure you book an appointment in Occupational Health for an assessment and further advice before your trip.

Road Traffic Accidents



Accidents and Crime:

Road and vehicle safety standards vary greatly. Avoid the likelihood of traffic accidents as a pedestrian and motorist through selecting drivers and cars carefully, if possible avoid driving at night, travelling by moped or motorcycle. Check for seatbelts and use in any vehicle you travel in and be aware of risks.

Do not carry large amounts of money and valuables.

Occupational Health Service

Contact Occupational Health for a travel health risk assessment as soon as you know you will be travelling overseas for work, as some vaccines schedules require up to 3 months to gain adequate immunity.

Please note that some symptoms may not occur until days or weeks after your return from travel.

Report all incidents of travel related ill health to Occupational Health on your return to the UK.

Health information for overseas travellers is available on the University Occupational Health web page www.admin.ox.ac.uk/uohs



For work related travel risk assessments and appointments please contact:

Occupational Health Services
10 Parks Road, Oxford, OX1 3PD

Enquiries:

Tel: 01865 (2)82676

Fax: 01865 (2)82678

E-mail: enquiries@uohs.ox.ac.uk