

WORLD LEARNING PROGRAM HEALTH GUIDELINES & REQUIREMENTS: AUSTRALIA

BRIEF SUMMARY

Prior to Departure:

Schedule an appointment with your health care provider or a travel medicine clinic at least 8 weeks prior to departure. Please note that some vaccines are only available at travel medicine clinics.

Take an adequate quantity of all your prescription and non-prescription medications to last your entire stay.

Ensure you are up to date on all routine vaccines. Routine vaccines that should be up to date prior to traveling include: Covid 19, varicella (chicken pox), hepatitis A & B, HPV, influenza, meningococcal, measles/mumps/rubella (MMR), polio, and tetanus/diphtheria/pertussis (TDaP).

Discuss your specific travel itinerary (including various in-country locations you plan to visit) with your health care provider. We recommend you ask about and discuss:

- Are you up to date on your routine vaccines including all boosters?
- Are there additional vaccines recommended or required in Australia? These may include but are not limited to:
 - **Japanese Encephalitis**
- Plan for the prevention and treatment of traveler's diarrhea.

World Learning recommends that the International Certificate of Vaccination or Prophylaxis (ICVP,) also known as the yellow WHO card, along with a copy of your immunization record should be kept with your passport so that it is easily accessible.

While You Are in Australia:

- Remember motor vehicle accidents remain the biggest risk for international travelers. Ride in the back seat if possible, wear seatbelts, and do not be afraid to ask your driver to slow down.
- Take preventive measures to avoid tick and other insect bites.
- Take measures to prevent traveler's diarrhea.
- Do not travel alone and maintain an awareness of your surroundings at all times.

- For your protection, use barrier methods (e.g., condoms) if you are sexually active.
- While traveling abroad, minimize high-risk behaviors.
- **All participants with potential anaphylactic allergic reactions are required to bring at least two epi-pens with them to their program.**
- Notify your Program staff if you become ill.

Insurance:

SIT provides health insurance and partners with International SOS (iSOS) to facilitate access to medical and mental healthcare service for our students. Please visit our Student Insurance webpage for more detailed information. To receive care while abroad, call **iSOS: +1-215-942-8478** (or use the chat function in the iSOS app) **SIT Member Number: 11BYCA639556**. *If you need help getting connected with iSOS please reach out to studentwellbeing@sit.edu.*

GENERAL INFORMATION

Maintaining good health and safety is a critical element of your successful participation in any World Learning program. While traveling abroad students should always use caution in unfamiliar places and circumstances. Access to emergency care abroad may not be what you are used to at home. A review of health, safety and security information will be provided to students upon arrival in the host country.

To protect your health in Australia, you may need certain pre-departure immunizations followed by reasonable health precautions while in the country. The following health guidelines and requirements are based on years of experience and the current recommendations from the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. They are designed to inform you of health concerns that may be present in Australia.

Although no information sheet can address every conceivable contingency, the following health guidelines and requirements are an attempt to provide you with a standard, which if followed, should optimize good health during your stay abroad.

WORLD LEARNING PROGRAM HEALTH GUIDELINES & REQUIREMENTS: AUSTRALIA

You may find that local customs and practice, as well as varying US health care providers' approaches, at times conflict with these guidelines. It is essential that you review these health guidelines and requirements with your health care provider and discuss individual issues such as pre-existing medical problems and allergies to specific drugs. Any further questions or concerns should be directed to the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)- www.cdc.gov/travel - or to your own health care provider.

Substance Use:

Please note that if you regularly use alcohol, marijuana, or other psychoactive substances, it is common to experience significant withdrawal effects including anxiety, difficulty concentrating, difficulty sleeping and more serious symptoms that may impact your ability to be successful in your program.

Please be aware that SIT Study Abroad expressly prohibits the use, possession, distribution, or unlawful manufacture of any controlled substance by students or staff. Convincing indication of drug use requires immediate dismissal from any SIT Study Abroad program. Medical marijuana use is not permitted on SIT programs. It is recommended that you read our student handbook (see link below) prior to departure. This outlines our policies and procedures including that of Alcohol and Other Drug Use. <https://studyabroad.sit.edu/documents/studyabroad/Student-Handbook.pdf>

IMMUNIZATIONS

Immunizations are recommended to protect your health and well-being by building up your immune defenses against specific prevalent diseases. The decision to receive each vaccine should be made with your primary care provider or Travel Medicine clinic provider.

Plan ahead at least 8 weeks since some immunizations require more than one dose for effectiveness. It is recommended that you bring a copy of your immunization record with you and insert this document in your passport so that it is easily accessible.

World Learning RECOMMENDS participants are up to date with each of the following vaccinations including initial series and boosters:

- COVID-19
- Hepatitis A
- Hepatitis B
- Meningococcal (meningitis)
- MMR (measles, mumps, rubella)
- Tetanus, diphtheria, pertussis (Tdap)
- Varicella (chicken pox)
- Polio
- Japanese Encephalitis
 - Consider Japanese Encephalitis vaccination after discussing with your health care provider.

PREVENTION OF INSECT BORNE ILLNESS

Personal Protective Measures (for mosquitos and other insects):

For all the diseases listed below, bug exposure and bite prevention are crucial to reducing the risks to travelers' health. We recommend you take the following steps.

Prevent bug exposure and bites:

- Wear long sleeves, long pants, shoes, and hats to minimize exposed skin.
- Wear clothing and shoes treated with the repellent permethrin. (Permethrin is not for use directly on skin.)

Choose an appropriate insect repellent and use it regularly:

Protection against multiple bugs (mosquitos, ticks, flies, etc.): The CDC recommends a repellent which contains at least 20% DEET.

Protection against mosquitoes only: Repellents other than DEET protect against mosquitoes but may not be as effective against other bugs:

- Picaridin (also known as KBR 3023, Bayrepel and icaridin)
- Oil of lemon eucalyptus (OLE) or para- menthane-diol (PMD)
- IR3535 (SkinSoSoft)
- 2-undecanone (methyl nonyl ketone)

WORLD LEARNING PROGRAM HEALTH GUIDELINES & REQUIREMENTS: AUSTRALIA

Always use repellents as directed.

Please consult your healthcare provider if you have any health concerns regarding bug repellents. (See recommendations above.)

Avoid transiting tall grass, shrubs, or woody areas and check for ticks afterward.

Consider using a mosquito net while sleeping.

Check your entire body for ticks after outdoor activity.

If you experience symptoms after the program, please consult your healthcare provider and be sure to tell them about your travel.

Treat clothing and gear with products containing 0.5% permethrin. Permethrin can be used to treat boots, clothing and camping gear and remain protective through several washings. Alternatively, you can buy permethrin-treated clothing and gear.

Use Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)-registered insect repellents containing DEET, picaridin, IR3535, Oil of Lemon Eucalyptus (OLE), para-menthane-diol (PMD), or 2-undecanone.

Japanese Encephalitis:

In 2021– early 2022, a Japanese encephalitis (JE) outbreak occurred in parts of Australia. The outbreak was focused in rural areas surrounding the Murray River, particularly near the border of Victoria and New South Wales. In November 2022, JE virus was detected in pigs in the Murray River region, confirming risk for JE in humans during the current Australian summer season. The vaccine is recommended if you will be spending a month or more in this area or visiting these rural areas, hiking or camping, or staying in places without air conditioning, screens, or bed nets. The vaccine is not recommended for travelers planning short-term travel to urban areas or traveling at times outside of the Japanese encephalitis season.

Japanese encephalitis virus is spread to people through the bite of an infected mosquito. Most people who get infected experience mild or no symptoms. In people who develop severe disease, early symptoms include fever, headache, and vomiting. These symptoms may be followed by disorientation, coma, and seizures. For most travelers the chance of getting infected with Japanese encephalitis virus is low. In places with four seasons, the risk is greatest in the summer and fall. In tropical and subtropical areas, mosquitoes spread the virus all year long. Travelers

can protect themselves against Japanese encephalitis by getting the Japanese encephalitis vaccine and following the personal protective measures listed above.

Arbovirus Illness (Ross River Virus Disease):

Ross River virus disease is spread to people by the bite of an infected mosquito. Most people who get Ross River virus do not feel sick. For those who do get sick, symptoms include joint pain and swelling, muscle pain, fever, tiredness, and rash. Most patients recover within a few weeks, but some people experience joint stiffness or pain, or tiredness for many months. Travelers to Australia and Papua New Guinea can get Ross River virus disease if bitten by an infected mosquito. It is the most common mosquito-borne disease in Australia. The risk of infection is increased by the following:

- Spending a lot of time outdoors
- Traveling during times of the year when mosquitoes are more common, such as during the summer.

Travelers can protect themselves by minimizing mosquito bites using the personal protective measures listed above.

PREVENTION OF FOOD/WATER BORNE ILLNESS

Diarrhea Producing Infections:

"Traveler's diarrhea" is the most common form of travel related illness. In otherwise healthy adults, diarrhea is rarely serious or life-threatening, but it can make a trip very unpleasant. The diarrhea may last several days and is characterized by watery, non-bloody bowel movements. Traveler's diarrhea usually requires no treatment other than fluid replacement by drinking plenty of water or using an Oral Rehydration Solution (ORS) to prevent dehydration. ORS can be purchased as a prepacked solution. Antidiarrheals such as Imodium or Lomotil may be used short-term in some circumstances as long as the traveler stays well hydrated and has no bloody stools or abdominal pain. Pepto Bismol can be used to treat diarrhea, but large quantities are required. Antibiotics may be indicated for more severe cases of traveler's diarrhea especially if the traveler has fever or stools with blood or

WORLD LEARNING PROGRAM HEALTH GUIDELINES & REQUIREMENTS: AUSTRALIA

mucous. Ask your health care provider before your program begins for their recommendations regarding traveler's diarrhea.

Tap water is considered safe in Australia. If you are unsure of the food and water quality in the area you are visiting, check with a reliable source before using. Be sure to wash your hands scrupulously with non-contaminated water and soap before eating.

Hepatitis A:

Hepatitis A is a highly contagious virus that causes liver inflammation. It is most commonly spread through contaminated food and water and is best avoided by practicing safe food and water habits as listed above.

A Note on Swimming...

Avoid swimming or wading in fresh water. Many parasites and bacteria live in fresh water and can cause serious illness. If you are unsure about the safety in the area you are visiting, check with a reliable source before swimming. Properly chlorinated pools and salt water are generally safe from infectious diseases.

OTHER HEALTH CONCERNS

COVID 19:

COVID-19 is a respiratory virus that is spread through direct contact with an infected person as well as through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes. Symptoms of COVID-19 may appear 2-14 days after exposure and may include fever, cough, and shortness of breath. The illness can also cause muscle or body aches, sore throat, vomiting and diarrhea. Reported illnesses have ranged from mild symptoms to severe illness and death.

It's recommended all eligible travelers should be up to date with their COVID-19 vaccines which is the best way to prevent infection. Please see Your COVID-19 Vaccination for more information.

World Learning recommends that students check the country's consular website for up-to-date information on entry and exit requirements.

Other precautions to minimize your exposure to Covid include:

Clean your hands frequently with soap and water or alcohol-based disinfectant.

Wear an N-95 mask when in large crowds or on public transportation.

Avoid people with suspected or confirmed Covid infection.

Inform your Program staff immediately if you have a respiratory illness; have a fever or are feeling sick; if you have been in close contact with a person known to have COVID-19; and/or have recently traveled from an area with widespread or ongoing community spread of COVID-19.

Avoid travel if you are sick or have a fever. Your Program staff will make appropriate accommodations for students who are ill.

Wear an N-95 facemask, especially when you are around other people (e.g., sharing a room or vehicle) and before you enter a health care provider's office.

Tuberculosis:

Tuberculosis (TB) is a bacterial disease spread by airborne droplets from an infected person. Bacteria in the lungs can move through the blood to infect other parts of the body, such as the kidney, spine, and brain. TB occurs throughout the world but is much more common in some countries including Australia. Travelers can protect themselves by avoiding close contact with people who are coughing and who look sick. If you believe you were exposed, you should ask for TB testing when you return home.

Ocean Hazards:

When swimming or snorkeling in the ocean, be aware of currents and make sure you do not get too far away from the beach or boat. Wear sunscreen and drink plenty of water. Full length wet suits can minimize risk of jelly fish and other stinging organisms. Avoid walking on the reef. If you are scratched by the reef, wash your wounds thoroughly with soap and water and apply antibiotic ointment.

WORLD LEARNING PROGRAM HEALTH GUIDELINES & REQUIREMENTS: AUSTRALIA

Blood Borne Pathogens:

Pathogens such as Hepatitis B and C and HIV are more prevalent in certain parts of the world and can cause severe, long-term illness. Practices to minimize transmission through sanitization may be less regulated than at home.

You can minimize your risk by:

Practicing safe sex, including the use of condoms

Not sharing needles, syringes, razors, toothbrushes, or medical equipment, such as a glucose monitor.

Not getting tattoos while traveling overseas.

Sun Exposure:

World Learning recommends the use of sunglasses, wide-brimmed hats, sunscreen lotions, and lip protection to reduce problems related to sun exposure.

Air Quality:

Students with a history of asthma, other lung disease or allergies should be warned that air pollution may be worse than you are used to, causing more symptoms while you are traveling. Asthmatics should carry emergency medicines for severe asthma attacks.

Dehydration:

Dehydration occurs when the body is losing fluid faster than it can be replaced. This can be extreme in cases of diarrhea or vomiting, or gradual in cases of exertion without adequate fluid intake especially in hot climates and at high altitude.

Travelers should drink safe water or other safe beverages regularly and should avoid excessive sugary or caffeinated beverages as these can increase fluid loss.

Consistent fluid consumption throughout the day is best.

World Learning is committed to supporting the emotional and physical wellbeing of all students. If you have any questions or concerns about any of these health guidelines, please reach out to the Student Health Office associated with your upcoming Program.

