



Travel Medicine Information for Countries in Central Africa

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Vaccine and Immunization Information for Travelers to Countries in Central Africa



Health Information for Travelers to Countries in Central Africa

Recommended Vaccinations and Preventive Medications

The following vaccines may be recommended for your travel to Central Africa. Discuss your travel plans and personal health with a health-care provider to determine which vaccines you will need.

- **Hepatitis A** or immune globulin (IG). Transmission of Hepatitis A virus can occur through direct person-to-person contact; through exposure to contaminated water, ice, or shellfish harvested in contaminated water; or from fruits, vegetables, or other foods that are eaten uncooked and that were contaminated during harvesting or subsequent handling.
- **Hepatitis B**, especially if you might be exposed to blood or body fluids (for example, health-care workers), have sexual contact with the local population, or be exposed through medical treatment. Hepatitis B vaccine is now recommended for all infants and for children ages 11–12 years who did not receive the series as infants.
- **Malaria**: your risk of Malaria may be high in some of the countries in the Central Africa Region.

- **Rabies**, pre-exposure vaccination, if you might have extensive unprotected outdoor exposure in rural areas, such as might occur during camping, hiking, or bicycling, or engaging in certain occupational activities.
- **Typhoid**, Typhoid fever can be contracted through contaminated drinking water or food, or by eating food or drinking beverages that have been handled by a person who is infected. Large outbreaks are most often related to fecal contamination of water supplies or foods sold by street vendors.
- **Yellow Fever**, a viral disease that occurs primarily in Sub-Saharan Africa (West Africa) and Tropical South America, is transmitted to humans through the bite of infected mosquitoes. The virus is also present in Panama and Trinidad and Tobago. Yellow fever vaccination is recommended for travelers to endemic areas and may be required to cross certain international borders. Vaccination should be given 10 days before travel and at 10 year intervals if there is on-going risk.
- As needed, booster doses for **Tetanus-Diphtheria, Measles**, and a one-time dose of **Polio Vaccine** for adults.

Diseases found in the Central Africa (risk can vary by country and region within a country; quality of in-country surveillance also varies)

The preventive measures you need to take while traveling in the Central Africa depend on the areas you visit and the length of time you stay. You should observe the precautions listed in this document in most areas of this region.

Malaria:

Malaria is always a serious disease and may be a deadly illness. Humans get Malaria from the bite of a mosquito infected with the parasite. Prevent this serious disease by seeing your health care provider for a prescription antimalarial drug and by protecting yourself against mosquito bites.

Central Africa:

Your risk of malaria may be high in all countries in Central Africa, including cities. All travelers to Central Africa, including infants, children, and former residents of Central Africa, may be at risk for malaria. Prevent this serious disease by seeing your health care provider for a prescription antimalarial drug and by protecting yourself against mosquito bites. All travelers should take one of the following drugs:

- atovaquone/proguanil,
- doxycycline,
- mefloquine, or
- primaquine (in special circumstances).

Yellow Fever:

Central Africa:

A certificate of Yellow Fever vaccination may be required for entry into certain countries in Central Africa.

Food and Waterborne Diseases: (All Regions in Africa)

Make sure your food and drinking water are safe. Food and waterborne diseases are

the primary cause of illness in travelers. Travelers' Diarrhea can be caused by viruses, bacteria, or parasites, which are found throughout North, West, Central, East, and South Africa and can contaminate food or water. Infections may cause diarrhea and vomiting (E. Coli, Salmonella, Cholera, and Parasites), fever (Typhoid Fever and Toxoplasmosis), or liver damage (Hepatitis).

Other Disease Risks:

Central Africa:

Dengue, Filariasis, Leishmaniasis, and Onchocerciasis (River Blindness) are other diseases carried by insects that also occur in this region. Protecting yourself against insect bites will help to prevent these diseases. The risk for contracting African Sleeping Sickness (Trypanosomiasis), which is caused by the bite of an infected tsetse fly, is high in northern Angola, Central African Republic, Cameroon, Chad, Congo, Democratic Republic of the Congo, and southern Sudan and there is significant risk of infection for travelers visiting or working in rural areas. Plague, an infectious disease of animals and humans caused by a bacterium, is present in wild rodent populations in rural areas of Africa. Ituri District in the Democratic Republic of the Congo is known to be one of the most active areas for plague worldwide. People usually get plague from being bitten by an infected rodent flea. Generally, the risk of plague infection for travelers is low, especially for persons staying in hotels in cities. A number of Rickettsial Infections also occur in this region. Wearing protective clothing and avoiding rural areas or areas of dense vegetation along streams, is the best protection. Schistosomiasis, a parasitic infection, can be contracted in fresh water in this region. Do not swim in fresh water (except in well-chlorinated swimming pools) in these countries. Other infections that tend to occur more often in longer-term travelers (or immigrants from the region) include Tuberculosis, HIV and Hepatitis B.



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