

OTHER PLACES YOU CAN OBTAIN INDEPENDENT ADVICE ON SAFE TRAVEL:

- ⇒ World Health Organisation: International Travel & Health:
www.who.int/ith
- ⇒ Foreign & Commonwealth Office: www.fco.gov.uk
- ⇒ Health advice for travellers - available from the Department of Health: www.dh.gov.uk/PolicyAndGuidance/HealthAdviceforTravellers/fs/en
- ⇒ Journey-specific health advice provided by Health Protection Scotland: www.fitfortravel.scot.nhs.uk
- ⇒ For travel health advice, disease prevention, DVT prevention, sun care, insurance issues and how to avoid mosquito bites: www.travelhealth.co.uk
- ⇒ Travel Healthy - Top Tips and Vaccine Preventable Diseases for Travellers, available at: www.spmsd.co.uk

Bon Voyage!



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THE OLDER TRAVELLER
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**TRAVEL CLINIC
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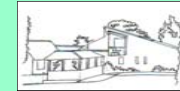
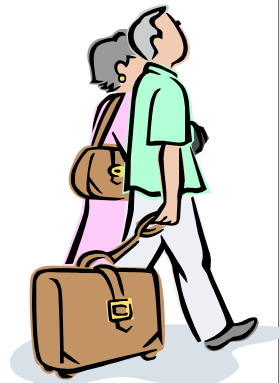
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MANY OLDER TRAVELLERS are making the most of their free time after retirement and travelling to exotic destinations. Most older travellers have an enjoyable and safe holiday. However, they are at increased risk of some travel associated health problems, so pre-travel planning and sensible precautions are important.

Why are older travellers at increased risk of health problems abroad?

- ⇒ They are more susceptible to **travellers' diarrhoea** (TD) due to having decreased stomach acid and more prone to develop dehydration as the ability to regulate water and salt is reduced with age.
- ⇒ They have **decreased immunity** to infection (influenza outbreaks are common on cruise ships).
- ⇒ **Loss of agility and balance**, poorly maintained roads, pavements and lighting increase the risk of falls. Fractures are more likely due to osteoporosis. Walking long distances through airports can be physically demanding.
- ⇒ **Pre-existing illness** is more likely. Medications may be neglected or forgotten on holiday.
- ⇒ There is an increased risk of **deep vein thrombosis** (DVT) with age and long distance travel with restricted mobility can increase this risk further.
- ⇒ **Angina and breathing difficulties** can worsen at altitude and on flights.
- ⇒ **Yellow Fever Vaccine** can have serious side effects in the over 65's.



RECOMMENDATIONS AND ADVICE

- ⇒ Find comprehensive insurance that will cover any pre-existing illness and repatriation if necessary.
- ⇒ Carry routine medicines in hand luggage and take extra supplied to deal with potential delays. Carry a list of the generic names and dosage of the routine drugs and note of relevant past medical history. Remember to take medication as usual on the day of departure.
- ⇒ Those with chronic conditions may wish to wear a medic alert bracelet or carry an ID card that will inform medical staff of their condition. If oxygen or wheelchair access is required for a flight, inform the airline asap. Discuss with your specialist nurse or doctor how to take your medication on a flight if you are crossing more than 5 time zones.
- ⇒ Take precautions against DVT on long haul journeys. Exercise your legs regularly and drink plenty of non-alcoholic fluids. Below knee compression stockings also appear to help in reducing the risk of DVT. These should be purchased from a chemist.
- ⇒ Take extra care to avoid contaminated food and water as dehydration from TD can be severe. Take rehydration sachets.
- ⇒ Take care in the sun as older skin is more fragile and drink plenty of fluids to prevent dehydration.
- ⇒ Annual flu vaccinations are recommended normally for the over 65s, especially for cruise ship travellers.