

4150 Woodlands Pkwy, Suite B
Palm Harbor, FL 34685
(727) 772-1452



2137 Little Rd
Trinity, FL 34655
(727) 372-6760

SHOTS FOR TRAVEL

Do I need shots before I travel?

Before you travel, first make sure you are up to date on all of the routine shots. These include tetanus, polio, measles, and mumps. It is also good to have a flu shot.

When you travel to foreign countries, you may be exposed to other infections. Many of these illnesses can be prevented with vaccines or medicine. At least 2 months before you travel, tell your health care provider where you plan to travel. Your provider will let you know what shots or medicines you need to prevent illnesses in the countries you will be visiting. This decision will be based on:

- the places you plan to visit
- your age, medical history, and health
- your exposure risk.

You should also find out which countries require proof of vaccination before they will let you visit.

Infants and young children should be up-to-date with the shots routinely given in their home country before traveling. Check the minimum age requirement for any special shots your child will need.

What special shots or medicines do I need before I travel?

More than a dozen vaccines are available to prevent diseases you might be exposed to during travel to other parts of the world. Depending on where you are traveling, you might need vaccines against hepatitis A and B, chickenpox, pneumonia, typhoid fever, yellow fever, meningitis, Japanese encephalitis, or rabies. (For a complete series of hepatitis shots you may need to see your health care provider at least 6 months before you travel.)

If you are going to a part of the world where malaria is common, such as Africa, Asia, or South America, you may need to take medicine to prevent malaria. Malaria is a serious, sometimes fatal, disease caused by a parasite. It causes fever and flulike illness. It may also cause anemia and jaundice (yellow coloring of the skin and eyes). It is usually spread by mosquito bites. Your health care provider will prescribe a medicine that you will start taking before you leave. You will continue taking the medicine while you travel in the risk area and for 4 to 6 weeks after you leave the area.

How can I get up-to-date information for the places I plan to visit?

Check with your health care provider or your local health department for information. You can also get detailed, up-to-date travel advice for specific countries and diseases from:

- a travel health clinic
- the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) via the Traveler's Health hotline at 1-877-FYI-TRIP or online at <http://www.cdc.gov/travel> ▶▶. If you are pregnant, breast-feeding, or traveling with young children, be sure to ask about or look up specific information about your situation.

A number of other travel medicine sites can be found on the Web, such as:

- Travel Health Online: <http://www.tripprep.com> ▶▶
- World Health Organization: <http://www.who.int/child-adolescent-health/> ▶▶

It may seem as though the world is full of dangerous infections when you travel. However, the most common cause of death among travelers is injury, usually caused by a motor vehicle accident. Become familiar with the local road conditions, traffic patterns, and signals before you get behind the wheel and remember to wear your safety belt