

Assemble a Travel Kit

A Travel Health Kit allows the traveler to take care of minor health problems as they occur. The specific contents of the health kit are based on destination, duration of travel, type of travel and any preexisting medical conditions. These are available commercially or items can be purchased individually to customize the kit for the travelers specific needs. Basic items that should be included are listed below.

- Alcohol-based hand gel
- Keep a copy of your foreign travel shot record with your passport.
- Personal prescription medications (copies of all prescriptions, including the generic names for medications, and a note from the physician for controlled substances and injectable medications should be carried)
- Anti-malarial medications, if applicable
- Anti-diarrheal medication
- Antibiotic for self-treatment of moderate to severe diarrhea from your doctor.
- Antihistamine
- Decongestant
- Anti-motion sickness medication
- First aid kit and thermometer
- Acetaminophen, aspirin, ibuprofen, or other medication for pain or fever
- Mild laxative
- Cold medicine
- Antacid
- Extra pair of prescription glasses

For more information on vaccinations to specific countries, please contact us at the locations or phone numbers listed below.

Sarasota County Health Department (SCHD)

Ringling Center (Main Office)
2200 Ringling Boulevard
Sarasota, FL 34237
(941) 861-2900

South County Family Health Center
7820 South Tamiami Trail, Building B-2
Venice, FL 34293
(941) 861-3300



Sarasota County Health and Human Services (SCHHS)

SCHD is dedicated to protecting and improving the health of all people in Sarasota County by providing quality environmental, community, and personal health services and by promoting healthy lifestyles. SCHHS collaborates with community partners to promote and assure high quality, accessible health and human services for Sarasota County residents.



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Travelers' Health Advisory

April 7, 2006

Avian Influenza A (H5N1)

Avian influenza A (H5N1) viruses usually affect wild birds but now are infecting and causing serious and widespread disease among domestic poultry, such as chickens, in Asia, Europe and Africa. Human infections with H5N1 viruses are rare, but have occurred during 2003-2006 in numerous countries in these areas with many cases resulting in death. Most cases of H5N1 infection in humans result from direct contact with sick poultry in the affected countries in Asia.

The threat of a pandemic arising from new influenza subtypes such as H5N1 will be greatly increased if the virus gains the ability to spread from one human to another. Such transmission has not yet been observed.

H5N1 infections in humans can cause serious disease and death. An inactivated vaccine to protect humans against influenza A (H5N1) is not yet available, but candidate vaccines are undergoing human clinical trials in the United States. The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) has not recommended that the general public avoid travel to any of the countries affected by H5N1. If you are planning a trip to a country where H5N1 is present, there are precautions that you can take to reduce the risk of infection. Those control measures are summarized inside this brochure. In addition, more information may be found on the CDC website at <http://www.cdc.gov/travel> and the World Health Organization (WHO) website at http://www.who.int/csr/disease/avian_influenza/en/.

**Before any international travel,
BE SURE TO:**

- Visit CDC's Travelers' Health website at <http://www.cdc.gov/travel> to educate yourself and others who may be traveling with you about any disease risks and CDC health recommendations for international travel in areas you plan to visit.
- Be sure you are up to date with all your routine vaccinations, and see your doctor or healthcare provider, ideally 4-6 weeks before travel, to get any additional vaccination, medications, or information you may need.
- Assemble a travel health kit containing basic first aid and medical supplies. Be sure to include a thermometer and alcohol-based hand gel for hand hygiene. See the Travelers Health Kit page in *Health Information for International Travel* for other suggested items.
- Identify in-country healthcare resources in advance of your trip.
- Check your health insurance plan or get additional insurance that covers medical evacuation in case you become sick. Information about medical evacuation services is provided on the U.S. Department of State web page "Medical Information for Americans Traveling Abroad," at http://travel.state.gov/travel/tips/health/health_1185.html.

**During travel to an area
affected by H5N1 avian influenza,
REMEMBER:**

- One of the most important preventive practices is careful and frequent hand washing. Cleaning your hands often with soap and water removes potentially infectious material from your skin and helps prevent disease transmission. Waterless alcohol-based hand gels may be used when soap is not available and hands are not visibly soiled.
- Avoid all direct contact with poultry. Avoid places such as poultry farms and bird markets where live poultry are raised or kept. Avoid handling any surfaces contaminated with poultry feces or secretions.
- Influenza viruses are destroyed by heat; therefore, as a precaution, all foods from poultry, including eggs and poultry blood, should be thoroughly cooked.
- If you become sick with symptoms such as a fever accompanied by a cough, sore throat, or difficulty breathing or if you develop any illness that requires prompt medical attention, a U.S. consular officer can assist you in locating medical services and informing your family or friends. Inform your healthcare provider of any possible exposures to avian influenza. You should defer further travel until you are free of symptoms, unless your travel is health related.

**After your return from any area
affected by H5N1 avian influenza,
DON'T FORGET:**

- Monitor your health for 10 days.
- If you become ill with a fever plus a cough, sore throat, or have trouble breathing during this 10-day period, consult a healthcare provider. *Before you visit a healthcare setting, tell the provider staff the following: 1) your symptoms, 2) where you traveled, and 3) if you have had direct contact with poultry or close contact with a severely ill person. This way, he or she can be aware that you have traveled to an area reporting avian influenza.* Your healthcare provider may make arrangements to have you wear a surgical mask if they feel you may be infectious to others in a waiting room or hospital setting.
- Do not travel while ill unless you are seeking medical care. Limiting contact with others as much as possible can help prevent the spread of an infectious illness.
- Even though the incubation period for influenza is short, some diseases might not manifest themselves immediately upon your return. Most travelers infected abroad become ill within 12 weeks after returning to the United States. There are, however, some diseases that may not show symptoms for as long as 6-12 months after exposure. If you have traveled outside the United States, it is always prudent to let your healthcare provider know, even if it has been longer than six months since your return.