Immunizations needed for travel abroad? [1]

Hi Alice,

What travel immunizations/vaccines am I going to need, because I'm going to Rome, Italy? I'm leaving soon, so can you please read and reply to this question as soon as possible?

Thanks.

Answer

Dear Reader,

Che divertimento! It sounds like you're in for an exciting trip. Not all travel destinations require vaccinations, but this may vary depending on your country of origin, where you're going, and the vaccinations you've already received. For more information about what applies to your specific situation and which countries would require immunization for travel, check out the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Travelers' Health Website [2]. Some vaccines may only be recommended for certain travelers based on their own health history and current health status, so speaking with a health care provider about your situation may give you more clarity. Additionally, if you're traveling with a particular group or school, you may want to find out if they require certain vaccines of their participants. The CDC keeps track of emerging health concerns, so you can be sure to get the most up-to-date vaccine information for travel.

It's best to find out well in advance of your trip (at least four to six weeks before your departure date) if you need vaccinations because some types require time to become effective or to administer a series of shots. Proper vaccinations can help you stay healthy while traveling, as can other health-related recommendations (such as whether to avoid the tap water or certain foods). This can help prevent you from bringing any illnesses home with you as well. And as you're preparing for travel, it may be wise to bring a trip-long supply of prescriptions you might need, such as birth control or antibiotics. Some questions to consider before you leave include:

- What prescriptions do I take regularly?
- What vaccinations have I already had?
- Does my health insurance provide international coverage and how does it work?
- Do I have any special dietary needs?
A final consideration is that, when you're traveling, if you do become ill, the medical system in the country you're visiting may operate in a way in which you aren't accustomed. A health insurance agent or a person coordinating your trip (if it's a group trip) can provide advice about how to access medical care while you're abroad. Hopefully this information will help you remain healthy so you can enjoy the adventures that await you.

Buon viaggio!

Alice!

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Immunizations, Screenings, & Tests [5]

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Medical Services (CUIMC) [11]

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