



Travelling Overseas? Plan Ahead



PEACETM
Multicultural
Services



Relationships Australia.
SOUTH AUSTRALIA



Travelling Overseas?

Plan Ahead



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Why have we provided this booklet?

Relationships Australia SA's PEACE Multicultural Services developed the Travel Safe Booklet – a guide to help travellers stay safe and healthy when travelling overseas. The booklet provides a basic guide for what to do before you begin your travels, tips for staying safe overseas and useful information about things you should consider after returning to Australia.

The guide covers issues such as:

- medication
- vaccination
- travel insurance
- condoms
- security
- getting medical procedures and treatment
- allergies
- safe sex
- safe injecting
- alcohol and drugs
- tattoos and body piercing
- considerations for people living with HIV
- illness and injury



Who is this booklet for?

This booklet is for travellers.

If you are traveling outside Australia for a holiday, study, business or any other reason, read this booklet before you leave.

The information in this booklet is a basic guide to help you take precautions or stay safe

1. Before you leave Australia.
2. During your travel.
3. After you return to Australia.

Introduction

Some overseas countries have high rates of viral infections such as hepatitis B, hepatitis C and HIV. When travelling overseas there may be an increased risk of infection with these viruses if precautions are not taken at all times.

People are exposed to risks of infections for many reasons. It could be because:

- They have limited knowledge of the risks of infection.
- They underestimate the risk involved in their actions.
- Their ability to make decisions is impaired by consumption of alcohol or drugs.
- They trust others.
- They are pressured by others to take risks.
- They are not well prepared to recognise risks and take appropriate actions.



The information in this booklet is presented in the following sections:

1. What to do before leaving Australia?
2. What precautions to take during your travel?
3. What to do when you return to Australia?
4. Useful information to support travellers to make informed decisions.





What to do before leaving Australia

Planning for a safe trip

Check entry restrictions

Entry restrictions may vary from country to country. Some of the common restrictions for overseas travellers are medical and health conditions such as HIV status. HIV/AIDS organisations and advocacy coalitions across the globe have been working to address this issue with the hope to clear restrictions that still exist in some countries. However, there are still many countries with laws that restrict the entry, stay and residence of people living with HIV. These restrictions include mandatory disclosure of one's HIV status, being subject to a mandatory HIV test, the need for discretionary approval to stay and the deportation of individuals once their HIV-positive status is discovered.

As you are planning your trip, check the laws of the country you are planning to visit before booking your ticket. www.afao.org.au/about-hiv/travel-and-migration/ has useful information.

Take medication with you

- Discuss with your family doctor the medication you will need to take.
- Take enough medication to last you for the whole time you are away.
- If your medication requires injecting, for example in diabetic treatment, then you will need to take sterile syringes and needles.

If you are living with HIV or are on pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) medication, it is very important for you to take enough of your medication for the trip and to take it as prescribed by your doctor.

Carry with your travel documents a letter from your doctor with information about:

- what medication you require
- how to take it (especially when you need to carry syringes and needles)
- how much will you will be carrying with you
- the medication is for your own personal use
- your HIV treatments and a contact number for your Australian doctor in should you require medical attention overseas.

Medication must be in its original packaging, clearly labelled with your name and dosage instructions.

- Certain medications aren't allowed in some countries. Please ask a travel clinic or specialist doctor for more information about restrictions.



Make sure you have the appropriate vaccinations

- Talk to your doctor about your travel destination and which vaccinations are required.
- Some vaccinations require travellers to plan months in advance.
- Vaccinations can be an entry requirement for some countries.
- Take a written record signed by your doctor when you get vaccinated.

Get travel insurance

Although the Australian Government has reciprocal arrangements in a number of countries (<https://www.humanservices.gov.au/individuals/services/medicare/reciprocal-health-care-agreements>), they strongly encourage travellers, to buy travel insurance before they leave the country to help with medical bills should something unexpected happen. Talk to your travel agent or private health insurer to help you choose the best travel insurance cover. Travel insurance costs take in to consideration:

- the countries you are visiting
 - the length of time you are travelling
 - your existing medical condition.
- Be prepared to pay out of pocket expenses at the time you receive any medical services while travelling, even if you do have travel insurance.
 - Make sure you take your travel insurance policy information and contact numbers with you so you can easily contact them. Consider leaving details of your travel insurance policy with family or friends in Australia.



“Travel insurance is as essential as your passport, regardless of your travel destination. If you can’t afford travel insurance, you can’t afford to travel!”

www.smartraveller.gov.au

Take condoms and water based lubricant

- The World Health Organisation states that in some countries, a large percentage of sexually transmissible infections occur during international travel as a result of having sexual intercourse without use of condoms (unsafe sex).
 - Condoms in Australia are of high quality, reliable and are easily accessible from a number of agencies, pharmacies and supermarkets.
 - Learn the correct use of condoms and lubricants.
 - When used correctly, male (external) and female (internal) condoms are equally effective in reducing the risk of sexually transmissible infections and unwanted pregnancy.
- Be prepared and plan ahead.
 - Take condoms and water based lubricants with you, make sure you put some in your suitcase and also have some in your pocket or carry bag at all times.
 - Always use them correctly.



Refer to page 22 for a list of agencies where you can purchase condoms and lubricant. Additionally, refer to pages 26 and 27 to learn how to use male and female condoms correctly.

Check for security issues in countries you are planning to travel to

In some countries, conflict or civil unrest is common.

The Australian Government has comprehensive information about security situations in most countries, which can be found online at www.smartraveller.gov.au.

- There is a 24 hour consular assistance hotline that travellers can call within and outside Australia.
- Before travelling, look up the consular assistance telephone details for the country you are travelling to and take them with you.
- It is highly recommended that you register your travel plan with the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. The information you provide will help them contact you in an emergency situation.



Having medical procedures and treatment overseas

In Australia there are rules that doctors and other clinicians must follow to prevent infectious diseases from spreading. Some of these rules include use of sterilised medical equipment, use of disposable syringes and needles, and screening all donated blood products for different viruses. In some countries this might not happen because of lack of resources, and as a result, the risk of being exposed to viruses such as HIV, hepatitis B and hepatitis C in these countries may be high.

Before travelling ensure that:

1. You speak to your doctor about what to expect when seeking medical treatment overseas.
2. You find out all you can about the country you are visiting and the medical facilities that will be available to you.
3. You develop a plan for where and how you will get medical assistance should you need it.
4. Once you are overseas, be aware of the risk of infections and clarify with the doctor what infection control measures are in place, to ensure that you are satisfied and confident in using their service.



What about allergies?

Travellers should be vigilant about their health and safety to prevent accident and injury. If you have an allergy consider wearing an allergy alert bracelet or carry an allergy alert card with instructions for first responders.



Other useful information

- Travellers who are informed can make decisions that protect their health. You can obtain further information about sexually transmissible infections, HIV, hepatitis B and hepatitis C from any of the agencies listed on page 22 or the back cover.
- For information related to other infections associated with bites from insects, animals, or through air and soil, check with your doctor or through the World Health Organisation website on www.who.int/ith/en/ (International Travel and Health section).
- Consider membership with the International Association for Medical Assistance to Travellers through their website www.iamat.org to access contacts of international network of physicians, hospitals, and clinics and to access health advice for travellers. Membership is free.



What you can do to make sure that you stay healthy and safe while overseas

Have safer sex

- Safer sex having sex using a condom correctly, consistently and every time:
 1. With a partner you don't know or who is a casual acquaintance
 2. With a partner when you are unsure about their sexual health status.
- Safer sex reduces the risk of contracting a sexually transmissible infection.

What you can do if you have unsafe sex

It is important to seek medical consultation within 24 hours of having unsafe sex as you might be able to access:

1. Medication that may prevent you from becoming HIV positive, which is referred to as Post-Exposure Prophylaxis (PEP). You must start taking the medication as early as possible and within 72 hours of exposure.
2. Emergency contraception to protect against unwanted pregnancy. You should take emergency contraception as soon as possible. You have up to 5 days to take it.

Did you know that:

- Condoms can protect people against MOST sexually transmissible infections such as HIV, syphilis, gonorrhoea, chlamydia and genital herpes. You can contract a sexually transmissible infection even if you have unsafe sex once.
- Always use a condom with lubricant when having sex.
- Condoms in Australia are of highest standard quality and it is advisable to take them with you.
- It is very important to have frank and open conversations about safer sex with your partner.

Use of alcohol and other drugs

Drinking alcohol and/or using other drugs in unfamiliar environments may be dangerous, and in some countries may carry harsh penalties.

Misuse of prescription medications can also be unsafe.

Excessive use of alcohol and other traditional drinks or drugs

The use of alcohol and other traditional drinks or drugs may influence your decision to practise safe sex or safe injecting. When this happens, the risk of contracting hepatitis B, hepatitis C and HIV increases.

Don't put yourself at risk

- Avoid binge-drinking alcohol.
- In some countries, alcohol can be much stronger than the Australian standard level.
- Be wary of home-made spirits, as they may be stronger than standard drinks, and can sometimes be lethal.
- Be wary of traditionally made drinks even if they are made from plants that are grown locally, as some of them can have the same effects as alcohol or drugs.
- Be wary of taking a combination of alcoholic drinks and drugs.
- Always be prepared and have a condom and lubricant with you.



Travelling overseas?



*Remember to
take your medications
and condoms with you*

There are new HIV preventatives that can significantly reduce risk. Talk to your doctor about them. Using condoms and lubricant can reduce the risk of sexually transmissible infections. Plan ahead, pack the condoms and always use them during sex. SA Health has contributed funds towards the

Plan ahead, pack the condoms and always use them during sex.

SA Health has contributed funds towards the



Plan ahead! Remember to bring your medications, condoms and lubricant.



...ive medications called PrEP
 ... your chances of getting HIV.
 ...se medications.
 ...t will reduce your risk of
 ...ions. Talk to your doctor
 ...e your risk of HIV.
 ...and water based lubricant
 ...ual activity.
 ...is program.

For further information call
 Relationships Australia SA: 1300 364 277
 SHINE SA: 1300 794 584



Safer injecting advice

It is safer not to inject because of the risk of blood-borne viruses (such as hepatitis B, hepatitis C and HIV) and other infections.

To dramatically reduce your risk of contracting HIV, hepatitis B and hepatitis C when injecting:

1. Use sterile equipment every time (including needles & syringes, spoons, filters, water, swabs, etc). Sterile equipment means that, syringes and needles must not have been previously used by anyone and are still in their original packaging.

Risks associated with some cultural practices

There are a number of cultural practices that many people choose have done back in their country of origin. Some of these cultural practices may increase the risk of HIV, hepatitis B and hepatitis C infections. Common practices include skin scarring, body piercing, tattooing, male circumcision, polygamy, widow cleansing, arranged marriage, wife inheritance and many others.

- If the cultural practice requires the use of sharp blades or needles you need to ensure that the equipment is new, disposable and sterilised.
- If the cultural practice requires that you have sexual contact with another person and you do not know their hepatitis and/or HIV status, you need to ensure that:
 - A condom is used, and
 - You speak to a sexual health care provider to prevent any possible transmission of sexually transmissible infections such as HIV.

Practices such as forced marriage, child marriage and female genital mutilation (FGM) are illegal in Australia and the perpetrator can be brought to justice even if the practice was performed overseas. If you believe that you are a victim of any of the illegal practices, seek help from any of the services listed at the end of this booklet.



Risks associated with tattooing and body piercing while overseas:

Tattooing and body piercing is popular overseas, because they may be easily accessible and affordable. The risk of spreading infectious diseases such as hepatitis B, hepatitis C and HIV can dramatically increase if the equipment is not properly sterilised and packaged.



Useful tips

- Always use professionally licensed and trained tattoo and body piercing providers.
- Have your own sterile equipment for use and disposal.
- Do not use alcohol and hot water to try to sterilise equipment, it does not work.
- Seek medical tests and advice if you suspect you were at risk of infection.



Illness and injury while overseas

- Travellers should be vigilant about their health and safety to prevent accident and injury. Know what to do and who to contact in the event of an accident or emergency.
- If you arranged for travel insurance, you need to contact your insurer as soon as possible. Most travel insurance providers have a contact number that you can call from anywhere in the world at any time of the day and night.

You need to see a medical doctor if you:

1. Have diarrhoea and a high fever or become sick with a fever or flu-like illness.
2. Are bitten or scratched by an animal.
3. Have been in a car accident.
4. Have been seriously injured.
5. Are sexually assaulted.



Contact the **Consular Emergency Centre** in Canberra for assistance from anywhere in the world on **+61 2 6261 3305** any time of the day or night.

- a) They can transfer you to talk to a counsellor.
- b) They can provide you with a list of local doctors and hospitals.
- c) They can arrange for your emergency evacuation under your guidance.

If a serious accident occurs, and blood transfusion is necessary, ask for the blood screening results to ensure that you receive blood products that do not contain viruses such as hepatitis B, hepatitis C or HIV. If the matter is not life threatening you could ask your travel insurance company to assist your evacuation to a country where there is a high standard of medical care.

Minimise the risk of illness or injury by:

- Avoiding high-risk conflict areas.
- Obtain an International Drivers Licence
- Avoiding driving in a country that has significantly different road traffic rules.
- Not driving when under the influence of alcohol and other drugs.
- Avoiding drinking water other than from sealed water bottles.
- Avoiding eating uncooked food especially oysters and other raw shell fish.
- Washing fruit and vegetables with clean water before eating.
- Cleaning any wound with clean water and mild soap to reduce the risk of infection.
- No ice blocks in drinks.
- Avoiding animals.
- Using hand sanitiser.
- Using mosquito repellents at all times in countries with mosquito borne diseases such as malaria and dengue fever.



What to do when you return to Australia

Seek advice and/or have a medical check up

- When returning to Australia reflect on the trip and the risks you may have.
- If you are unsure seek advice from any of the services listed at the back of this booklet. Staff will provide you with appropriate support and referrals for further testing if needed.

**It is better to be safe.
Have peace of mind and talk to your doctor.**



Travellers are encouraged to undergo a medical examination on return to Australia and provide information on recent travel itineraries, duration and purpose of the travel if they:

- Suffer from a chronic disease, such as HIV, hepatitis B, hepatitis C, diabetes, heart disease, or others.
- Return to Australia with a fever.
- Experience illness in the weeks after returning to Australia, particularly when fever, diarrhea, vomiting, jaundice, skin disease or genital infection are present.
- Received any medical treatment including blood transfusion while travelling.
- Have engaged in unsafe sex, unsafe injecting and/or unsafe body piercing and tattooing.
- Experienced a serious illness while travelling.
- Were sexually assaulted.
- Came in to contact with bodily fluids during accident or illness.
- Have spent months living in a developing country.





Useful information to support travellers

Where to purchase condoms

Male condoms can be purchased from the following outlets:

- All supermarkets.
- All pharmacies.
- Online.

For further information about female condoms and where to purchase them, as well as information on free male condoms and testing, please contact the following services:

PEACE Multicultural Services

Relationships Australia SA
49a Ormond Street
Hindmarsh, SA 5007
(08) 8245 8100
www.rasa.org.au

SHINE SA

64c Woodville Road
Woodville SA 5011
1300 794 584
www.shinesa.org.au

43 Peachey Road
Davoren Park SA 5113
1300 794 584

Noarlunga GP Plus Super Clinic
20 Alexander Kelly Drive,
Noarlunga (Level 1)
1300 794 584

Women's HIV Program

Relationships Australia SA
49a Ormond Street
Hindmarsh SA 5007
(08) 8245 8100
www.indabahiv.com.au

SAMESH

57 Hyde Street
Adelaide SA 5000
(08) 7099 5300

Clinic 275

1st Floor 275 North Terrace,
Adelaide, SA 5000
(08) 8222 5075

Travelling Overseas?

- ✈️ Plan Ahead
- ✈️ Take Your Medications and Condoms
- ✈️ Always Use Them



Travel Specialist Doctors

Below is a list of some travel clinics in South Australia:

The Travel Doctor - TMVC

Suite 1, Ground Floor,
53-67 Hindmarsh Square, Adelaide, SA, 5000
Phone: (08) 8223 6225
Fax: (08) 8232 2354
Email: adelaide@traveldoctor.com.au
Website: <http://www.traveldoctor.com.au>

The Travel Clinic Australia

TCA / Travel Clinics Australia – Dr Bruce Wauchope
1284 South Road, ClovellyPark, SA 5042
Tel: 08 8276 5055
Fax: 08 3938 8374
Email: bedfordmedical@internode.on.net
Website: <http://travelclinic.com.au/south-australia>

Globe Medical

Level 1, 21 Hindmarsh Square, Adelaide SA 5000
T: (08) 8232 7372 or International +61 8 8232 7372
F: (08) 8232 3037 or International +61 8 232 3037
E: adelaide@globemedical.com.au
www.globemedical.com.au

Travel-Bug Medical and Vaccination Clinic

North Adelaide Office
182 Ward Street, North Adelaide, SA 5006
Phone: +61 (8) 8267 3544
Fax: +61 (8) 8239 2329
Website: www.travel-bug.com



For people living with HIV seeking support regarding legal issues including those associated with travel:

HIV/AIDS Legal Centre
T: (02) 9206 2060
E: halc@halc.org.au
www.halc.org.au

Useful travel information visit:

www.smarttraveller.gov.au
www.who.int/ith/en/
www.iamat.org
www.hivtravel.org





The Do's and Don'ts of Using a Condom

A condom is a sheath that is worn either over the penis (known as the “male” or the external condom) or inside the vagina (known as the “female” or the internal condom) during sexual intercourse, for the purpose of preventing pregnancy or protecting against sexually transmitted infection. (World Health Organization website 2017)

Condoms, when used correctly and consistently, are highly effective in preventing HIV and other sexually transmitted infections (STIs).

To get a specific information on how to put the condom on, contact either PEACE Multicultural services or SAMESH, please go to page 20 for contact details

The Dos and the Don'ts of using a Male/External Condom

It is very important that you:

- DO use a condom every time you have sex.
- DO put on a condom before having sex.
- DO read the package and check the expiration date.
- DO make sure there are no tears or defects.
- DO store condoms in a cool, dry place.
- DO use latex condoms.
- DO use water-based lubricant to prevent breakage.
- DON'T store condoms in your wallet as heat and rubbing can damage them.
- DON'T use oil-based products like baby oil, lotion, petroleum jelly, or cooking oil because they will cause the condom to break.
- DON'T use more than one condom at a time.
- DON'T reuse a condom.
- DON'T flush a male condom.



The Dos and the Don'ts of using a Female/Internal Condom

It is very important that you:

- DO use a female condom from start to finish, every time you have vaginal sex.
- DO read the condom package insert and check the expiration date.
- DO make sure there are no tears or defects.
- DO use lubricant to help prevent the condom from slipping and tearing.
- DO store female condoms in a cool, dry place.
- DON'T use a male condom with a female condom, as this can cause tearing.
- DON'T reuse a female condom.
- DON'T flush a female condom.



Where to get further information



PEACE Multicultural Services

Relationships Australia SA
49a Orsmond Street
Hindmarsh SA 5007
(08) 8245 8100

MOSAIC Services

Relationships Australia SA
192 Port Road
Hindmarsh SA 5007
(08) 8340 2022

Women's HIV Program

Relationships Australia SA
49a Orsmond Street Hindmarsh SA 5007
(08) 8245 8100

Nunkuwarrin Yunti

182-190 Wakefield Street
Adelaide 5000
(08) 8406 1600

Clinic 275

1st Floor 275 North Terrace,
Adelaide, SA 5000
(08) 8222 5075



Hepatitis SA

3 Hackney Road
Hackney SA 5069
(08) 8362 8443

SHINE SA

57 Hyde Street
Adelaide SA 5000
1300 794 584

64c Woodville Road
Woodville 5011
1300 794 584

43 Peachey Road
Davoren Park SA 5113
1300 794 584

Gilles Plain GP Plus Super Clinic
1 Gilles Crescent,
Hillcrest
1300 794 584

Noarlunga GP Plus Super Clinic (level 1)
20 Alexander Kelly Drive
Noarlunga centre
Ph 1300 794 584