

# WORLD LEARNING PROGRAM HEALTH GUIDELINES & REQUIREMENTS: ITALY

## BRIEF SUMMARY

### Prior to Departure:

- Schedule an appointment with your health care provider or a travel medicine clinic at least 8 weeks prior to departure. Please note that some vaccines are only available at travel medicine clinics.
- Take an adequate quantity of all your prescription and non-prescription medications to last your entire stay.
- Ensure you are up to date on all routine vaccines. Routine vaccines that should be up to date prior to traveling include: Covid 19, varicella (chicken pox), hepatitis A & B, HPV, influenza, meningococcal, measles/mumps/rubella (MMR), polio, and tetanus/diphtheria/pertussis (TDaP).
- Discuss your specific travel itinerary (including various in-country locations you plan to visit) with your health care provider. We recommend you ask about and discuss:
  - Are you up to date on your routine vaccines including all boosters?
  - Are there additional vaccines recommended or required in Italy? These may include but are not limited to:
    - **Tickborne Encephalitis**
  - Plan for the prevention and treatment of traveler's diarrhea.
- World Learning recommends that the International Certificate of Vaccination or Prophylaxis (ICVP,) also known as the yellow WHO card, along with a copy of your immunization record should be kept with your passport so that it is easily accessible.
- It is essential that you review these health guidelines and requirements with your health care provider and discuss individual issues such as pre-existing medical problems and allergies to specific drugs.
- Review **Before You Go** recommendations from [International SOS](#) (member portal access instructions can be found with your program-specific

planning documents here: <https://www.experiment.org/planning-documents/>

- Any further questions or concerns should be directed to the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)- [www.cdc.gov/travel](http://www.cdc.gov/travel) - or to your own health care provider.

### While You Are in Italy:

- Remember motor vehicle accidents remain the biggest risk for international travelers. Ride in the back seat, if possible, wear seatbelts, and do not be afraid to ask your driver to slow down.
- Take preventive measures to avoid mosquito, tick, insect bites.
- Take measures to prevent traveler's diarrhea.
- Do not travel alone and always maintain an awareness of your surroundings.
- Use condoms if you are sexually active.
- While traveling abroad, minimize high-risk behaviors.
- **All participants with potential anaphylactic allergic reactions are required to bring at least two epi-pens with them to their program.**
- Notify your Program staff if you become ill.

## GENERAL INFORMATION

Maintaining good health and safety is a critical element of your successful participation in any World Learning program. While traveling abroad students should always use caution in unfamiliar places and circumstances. Access to emergency care abroad may not be what you are used to at home. A review of health, safety and security information will be provided to students upon arrival in the host country.

To protect your health in Italy, you may need certain pre-departure immunizations followed by reasonable health precautions while in the country. The following health guidelines and requirements are based on years of experience and the

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current recommendations from the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. They are designed to inform you of health concerns that may be present in Italy.

Although no information sheet can address every conceivable contingency, the following health guidelines and requirements are an attempt to provide you with a standard, which if followed, should optimize good health during your stay abroad.

## PREVENTION OF INSECT BORNE ILLNESS

**Personal Protective Measures:** Prevent Tick Bites by...

Avoiding wooded and brushy areas with high grass and leaf litter. Walk in the center of trails. Conduct a full clothing and body check for ticks upon return from tick-infested areas. Shower soon after being outdoors. Showering may help wash off unattached ticks and it is a good opportunity to do a tick check. If you find a tick attached to your skin, simply remove the tick as soon as possible.

Treat clothing and gear with products containing 0.5% permethrin. Permethrin can be used to treat boots, clothing and camping gear and remain protective through several washings. Alternatively, you can buy permethrin-treated clothing and gear.

Use Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)-registered insect repellents containing DEET, picaridin, IR3535, Oil of Lemon Eucalyptus (OLE), para-menthane-diol (PMD), or 2-undecanone.

**Tickborne Encephalitis:** Most people infected with tick-borne encephalitis do not feel sick. When symptoms occur, they may include fever, aches, loss of appetite, headache, nausea, and vomiting. Some people develop swelling of the brain and/or spinal cord, confusion, and sensory disturbances. Tick-borne encephalitis can sometimes cause death. Travelers can prevent Tickborne encephalitis by avoiding tick bites, not drinking unpasteurized milk and getting the vaccine.

## PREVENTION OF FOOD/WATER BORNE ILLNESS

**Diarrhea Producing Infections:** "Traveler's diarrhea" is the most common form of travel related illness. In otherwise healthy adults, diarrhea is rarely serious or life-threatening, but it can make a trip very unpleasant. The diarrhea may last

several days and is characterized by watery, non-bloody bowel movements. Traveler's diarrhea usually requires no treatment other than fluid replacement by drinking plenty of water or using an Oral Rehydration Solution (ORS) to prevent dehydration. ORS can be purchased as a prepacked solution. Antidiarrheals such as Imodium or Lomotil may be used short-term in some circumstances as long as the traveler stays well hydrated and has no bloody stools or abdominal pain. Pepto Bismol can be used to treat diarrhea, but large quantities are required. Antibiotics may be indicated for more severe cases of traveler's diarrhea especially if the traveler has fever or stools with blood or mucous. Ask your health care provider before your program begins for their recommendations regarding traveler's diarrhea.

Tap water is considered safe in Italy. If you are unsure of the food and water quality in the area you are visiting, check with a reliable source before using.

## OTHER HEALTH CONCERNS

**Sun Exposure:** World Learning recommends the use of sunglasses, wide-brimmed hats, sunscreen lotions, and lip protection to reduce problems related to sun exposure.

**Air Quality:** Students with a history of asthma, other lung disease or allergies should be warned that air pollution may be worse than you are used to, causing more symptoms while you are traveling. Asthmatics should carry emergency medicines for severe asthma attacks.

**Dehydration:** Dehydration occurs when the body is losing fluid faster than it can be replaced. This can be extreme in cases of diarrhea or vomiting, or gradual in cases of exertion without adequate fluid intake especially in hot climates and at high altitude. Travelers should drink safe water or other safe beverages regularly and should avoid excessive sugary or caffeinated beverages as these can increase fluid loss. Consistent fluid consumption throughout the day is best.

*World Learning is committed to supporting the emotional and physical wellbeing of all students. If you have any questions or concerns about any of these health guidelines, please reach out to the Student Health Office associated with your upcoming Program.*

