

TRAVEL VACCINATIONS & MEDICATIONS

Many Experiment families have questions about whether specific travel vaccinations or medications are required or recommended for their programs. The following information addresses some of the most common questions we receive on these topics, as well as considerations for all Experiment families to discuss with their primary-care or travel-clinic providers.



Please note that The Experiment *does not require any vaccinations other than those listed on the Health Form for any Experiment program*. Members of The Experiment Medical Team are not able to make specific vaccination or medication recommendations because we are not Experimenters' healthcare providers. We are happy to provide you with the following information and resources and to discuss additional questions you may have. ***Decisions to elect travel vaccinations or medications ultimately rest with Experiment families and their healthcare providers***

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

WHAT ARE TRAVEL VACCINATIONS?

Travel vaccinations are intended to protect against diseases found in a particular destination. The U.S. [Centers for Disease Control](#) and [GeoBlue](#) maintain lists of vaccinations recommended for individual countries. Recommendations may vary by region within a country, time spent in country, and relative risk of exposure.

HOW CAN I FIND OUT WHICH VACCINATIONS ARE RECOMMENDED FOR MY PROGRAM LOCATIONS?

Please consult the [CDC](#) and [GeoBlue](#) websites to find comprehensive vaccination recommendations for your program country and please discuss these recommendations with your healthcare provider(s). The Experiment's GeoBlue member site can be found [here](#).

The Experiment member number is: **GTB9999WLBKT**.



A VACCINATION OR MEDICATION IS ONLY RECOMMENDED FOR CERTAIN REGIONS WITHIN THE COUNTRY—HOW CAN I FIGURE OUT IF I WILL BE IN THOSE REGIONS?

For vaccination and medication recommendations that vary by region within a country, please consult the country-specific Health Guidelines for your program available on your [Pre-departure site](#). These Health Guidelines contain maps showing sample program locations for comparison with maps provided by the CDC and GeoBlue.

A QUESTION ABOUT A PARTICULAR VACCINATION?

Considerations for travel vaccinations listed by the CDC and GeoBlue are briefly discussed below, and—where available—links to CDC Vaccine Information Statements are provided. Please note that the following is not a comprehensive list of current recommendations, nor are the vaccinations below relevant for all Experiment program destinations. This information is intended to clarify common points of confusion about individual vaccinations and to help Experiment families discuss current CDC and GeoBlue recommendations with their providers.

Cholera: Vaccination may be considered for children and adults who are traveling to areas of active cholera transmission. Additional information about cholera can be found at the [CDC's Disease Directory](#).

Hepatitis A: Generally recommended for international travelers by both the CDC and GeoBlue. Hepatitis A vaccination is also a standard component of the CDC's [Recommended Immunization Schedule for Children and Adolescents Aged 18 Years or Younger](#) and many Experimenters have already received this vaccination.

Hepatitis B: Generally recommended for international travelers by both the CDC and GeoBlue. Hepatitis B vaccination is also a standard component of the CDC's [Recommended Immunization Schedule for Children and Adolescents Aged 18 Years or Younger](#) and many Experimenters have already received this vaccination.



Japanese Encephalitis: Japanese encephalitis virus is transmitted through the bite of an infected mosquito and occurs in East, Southeast, and South Asia. The Japanese encephalitis vaccination can help protect travelers from Japanese encephalitis disease. The vaccination is administered in **2 doses spaced 28 days apart, with the second dose given at least a week before travel**. The Japanese encephalitis vaccination can cost upwards of several hundred dollars and is often not covered by insurance. Please be advised of these considerations around timing and cost when discussing this vaccination with your provider.

Polio: Polio vaccination is a standard component of the CDC's [Recommended Immunization Schedule for Children and Adolescents Aged 18 Years or Younger](#) and many Experimenters have already received this vaccination.

Measles: Measles vaccination is a standard component of the CDC's [Recommended Immunization Schedule for Children and Adolescents Aged 18 Years or Younger](#) and many Experimenters have already received this vaccination.

Meningitis: Meningitis is caused by a bacterial infection in the central nervous system. The meningococcal vaccine prevents a certain type of meningitis which is more common in parts of Africa. Meningococcal vaccination is a standard component of the CDC's [Recommended Immunization Schedule for Children and Adolescents Aged 18 Years or Younger](#) and many Experimenters have already received this vaccination.

Rabies: Rabies virus is transmitted through the bite of an infected animal and requires urgent treatment if an individual is exposed. Prompt treatment is required for both vaccinated and unvaccinated individuals, but treatment for those vaccinated pre-exposure is less intensive. The pre-exposure rabies vaccination is administered in **3 doses with 21 or 28 days between the first and final doses**. The rabies vaccination can cost several hundred dollars and may not be covered by

insurance. Please be advised of these considerations around timing and cost when discussing this vaccination with your provider.

Tickborne Encephalitis: Tickborne encephalitis virus is transmitted through tick bites or by eating or drinking unpasteurized dairy products from infected goats, sheep, or cows. It does not occur in the United States and there is no vaccination approved by the FDA available. Tickborne encephalitis occurs in Europe and Asia and is best prevented by eating only pasteurized dairy products and preventing tick bites. Additional information about tickborne encephalitis can be found at the [CDC's Disease Directory](#).

Typhoid Fever: Typhoid fever can be transmitted through food or water and is present in Asia, Africa, Central America, and South America. Typhoid vaccination helps to protect against typhoid infection but is not 100% effective and is not a substitute for being careful about food and water. Typhoid vaccines are available either as a single injection or as a course of 4 oral doses given over a week. Either form of the vaccine should be started **at least 2 weeks before travel**. Typhoid vaccination can cost a few hundred dollars and may not be covered by insurance. Please be advised of these considerations around timing and cost when discussing this vaccination with your provider.

Yellow Fever: Yellow fever is transmitted through the bite of an infected mosquito and occurs in areas of Africa and South America. Yellow fever vaccination helps protect against yellow fever transmission. The FDA-approved yellow fever vaccine—YF-Vax—is temporarily out of stock. An alternative vaccine—Stamaril—has been approved by the FDA in the interim and is considered comparably safe and effective. Either of these vaccines has very limited availability—please consult the CDC's [directory of approved yellow fever vaccination clinics](#) and make appointments early. The **vaccine must be given 10 days before travel and many clinics have waiting times of 4-6 weeks for an appointment**. The yellow fever vaccination can cost a few hundred dollars and may not be covered by insurance. Please be advised of these considerations around timing and cost when discussing this vaccination with your provider.

Many countries **REQUIRE** proof of yellow fever vaccination for travelers from areas with a risk of yellow fever, and yellow fever is therefore listed among vaccinations for several countries to which The Experiment does travel. Experimenters traveling from the United States to these countries do not need the yellow fever vaccination or any related documentation. Experimenters traveling from abroad or who have spent time in a country with a risk of yellow fever may be required to show proof of vaccination to enter their Experiment program country. If you believe you may fall under such a requirement based on your previous travel, please contact your Experiment Admissions Counselor or The Experiment Medical Team. Additional information about yellow fever can be found at the [CDC's Disease Directory](#).

WHAT ABOUT MALARIA?

There is no vaccination for malaria. Instead, prophylactic medication may be taken while traveling in areas of malaria transmission to reduce the risk of malarial infection. There are multiple medications available for malaria prophylaxis, each of which is more or less appropriate for different individuals or destinations, depending on personal health considerations and the strains of malaria present

- The CDC breaks down malaria prophylaxis recommendations by country in [this chart](#).
- The CDC also offers detailed pros and cons for each medication in [this chart](#).

Please discuss the information in these charts with your healthcare provider. Please also consult the maps linked in your program's country-specific Health Guidelines to compare with maps of malaria risk provided by the CDC and GeoBlue.

If I decide to get travel vaccinations, when do I need to start?

Vaccinations should not be left to the last minute. The Experiment recommends discussing travel vaccinations and medications with your healthcare providers at least 10 weeks before your program start date to ensure ample time to make decisions and schedule appointments. Please note that some vaccinations may only be available through dedicated travel-clinic providers.

I got some travel vaccinations and/or I'm going to take malaria meds—do I need to do anything else or carry any paperwork with me?



In general, you should not need to carry any specific paperwork with you as vaccinations and/or malaria medications are not required for country entry. The exception is the International Certificate of Vaccination and Prophylaxis—ICVP or “Yellow Card”—for those who have *received* the yellow fever vaccine. Please carry this with you if applicable.

You should carry a copy of the prescription for all prescription medications including malaria meds, and medications should always be packed in your carry-on luggage in the original packaging.

Please contact [The Experiment Medical Team](#) to inform us of your updated vaccination record and any plans to take malaria medication just as you would inform us of any other updates to your health history.

What about diseases for which there are not vaccinations?

While travel vaccinations are a great way to help protect yourself against certain diseases and to minimize their spread, they are only one among several important strategies for safeguarding your health while traveling. The Experiment is conscious that not all diseases have available vaccinations and that not all Experimenters will elect to get travel vaccinations or to take malaria medication.

The Experiment recommends that all Experimenters take personal precautions in-country to protect their health, regardless of their vaccination status. These include but are not limited to:

- Prevention of bites from and exposure to bugs (mosquitos, ticks, sand flies etc.)
- Food and water awareness and safe decision making
- Prevention of bites from and exposure to other animals (mammals, reptiles, etc.)
- Environmental health awareness (sun exposure, hydration, altitude, etc.)
- Minimizing your risk of trauma (using seatbelts, asking drivers to slow down, etc.)

Specific health guidelines for each Experiment country are available through [The Experiment Pre-departure site](#), including detailed recommendations for packing, preparation, and in-country behavior. Group leaders will brief all Experimenters on appropriate health precautions, and leaders will model, encourage, and support healthy and safe practices throughout program.



Additional questions?

Please contact your Experiment Admissions Counselor or [The Experiment Medical Team](#)