

WORLD LEARNING PROGRAM HEALTH GUIDELINES & REQUIREMENTS: SOUTH KOREA

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 that are recommended? These may include but are not limited to:
 - **Typhoid, Japanese Encephalitis**
- Plan for the prevention and treatment of traveler's diarrhea.
- If you eat a vegan or vegetarian diet, be aware that meat and seafood are central to Korean cuisine. Fermented seafood ingredients like fish sauce and shrimp paste are commonly found in dishes that may appear vegetarian – including kimchi which is a staple served at nearly every meal. Consider how you will maintain a healthy diet while you are traveling and plan ahead by learning a few key phrases to communicate your dietary needs.
- 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.
- Any further questions or concerns should be directed to the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)- www.cdc.gov/travel and/or the World Health Organization (WHO) <https://www.who.int/travel-advice> - or to your own health care provider.

While You Are in South Korea:

- Remember that 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 mosquitoes, ticks, and other insect bites.
- Take measures to prevent traveler's diarrhea.
- Do not travel alone and maintain an awareness of your surroundings at all times.
- 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.

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To protect your health in South Korea, 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 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 South Korea.

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 (for mosquitos and other insects):

For all the diseases listed below, bug exposure and bite prevention are crucial to reducing the risks to travelers' health. We recommend that you take the following steps.

- Prevent bug exposure and bites:
 - Wear long sleeves, long pants, shoes, and hats to minimize exposed skin.
- Wear clothing and shoes treated with the repellent permethrin. (Permethrin is not for use directly on skin.)
- Choose an appropriate insect repellent and use it regularly:
- Protection against multiple bugs (mosquitos, ticks, flies, etc.): The CDC recommends a repellent which contains at least 20% DEET.
- Protection against mosquitoes only: Repellents other than DEET protect against mosquitos but may not be as effective against other bugs:
 - Picaridin (also known as KBR 3023, Bayrepel and icaridin)
 - Oil of lemon eucalyptus (OLE) or para- menthane-diol (PMD)
 - IR3535 (SkinSoSoft)
 - 2-undecanone (methyl nonyl ketone)
- Always use repellents as directed.

- Please consult your healthcare provider if you have any health concerns regarding bug repellants. (See the recommendations above.)
- Avoid transiting tall grass, shrubs, or woody areas and check for ticks afterward.
- Consider using a mosquito net while sleeping.
- Check your entire body for ticks after outdoor activity.
- If you experience symptoms after the program, please consult your healthcare provider and be sure to tell them about your travel.

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, fever, 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.

More protracted and disabling diarrheal illnesses may be due to giardiasis, dysentery, cholera, and typhoid. Other diseases such as hepatitis A are also transmitted via contaminated food and water. These infections as well as "traveler's diarrhea" are often caused by contaminated food and water.

Tap water is safe to drink and cook with in South Korea. If you are unsure of the food and water quality in the area you are visiting, check with a reliable source before using it.

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 diseases, 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.