

When traveling to a foreign country, it's important to do your research and know the risks before you go.

You may want to ask these questions:

What contagious diseases are easily transmitted through mosquitoes, water, or unsanitary conditions?

What type of climate will you be in? Will there be a risk of heat stroke or sunburn?

Will you be flying into a high elevation creating a risk for altitude sickness?

Will hypothermia be a problem if you are traveling to a cold.

Are there poisonous animals to keep an eye out for and if you come into contact with them, how do you safeguard yourself?

There are many questions to ask yourself about travel health before traveling.

You can check warnings and advisories with your country's government website, visit the tourism board of the country you are visiting and check out blogs or even social media for up to date information.

Asking your favorite travel blogger a question about the country you are visiting on Twitter or Facebook, generally gets a response.

2. Vaccines and medications



The best way to maintain a healthy travel lifestyle when heading abroad is to know what vaccines will protect you from disease.

Hepatitis A, Hepatitis B, Typhoid Fever, Yellow Fever, Cholera, and Travellers' Diarrhea are all the top vaccines for any travel to South America or Asia.

Can you believe you can get a vaccine for travelers' Diarrhea now?

3. Watch What You Eat



Bad Goat in India

I wish we had the vaccine for travelers diarrhea when Dave ate some bad goat in India a few years ago.

It was after a surreal experience in the desert where a bunch of surgeons from Delhi joined us on a camel safari.

When the sun went down, the servants came out with plates of food for us to eat.

The lone goat that stood by our tent all afternoon had mysteriously disappeared, and when we asked the server what the kebabs were made of, he said, "Goat, it's very fresh!"

The next day they made a plate of curry for us and when I asked what was in it, "a goat was their reply."

Dave ate it, but I graciously declined. That goat had been sitting outside in the desert all night.

Predictably Dave was violently ill for the next 5 days.

Luckily we had a prescription of Ciprofloxacin (*given to us by the doctor we visited before leaving Canada*) with us so he didn't have to be hospitalized.

4. Visit a medical clinic before traveling

If you visit a travel medical clinic before your trip, your doctor will be able to give you the proper injections and prescribe the medicine that you will need in case of an emergency.

Malaria medication, antibiotics, and medicated creams are very important to have on hand.

Make sure to visit a couple of months in advance, some vaccines require multiple injections and you will have to go back more than once.

5. Stock your first aid kit



Speaking of medicines, we always carry a first aid kit for general emergencies.

It's your front of the line tool for maintaining a healthy travel lifestyle. Dave sprained his ankle really badly in Ireland last October. Ibuprophen and a good tensor bandage helped him out.

Don't go crazy and carry everything for every situation with you.

But do have staple items like anti-diarrheal medication, antihistamine, anti-motion sickness medication, pain relievers,

laxative, antacid, anti-bacterial ointment, hand sanitizer, Band-aids, aloe gel for sunburns, Moleskin for blisters, and oral rehydration salts to help recover from vomiting or dehydration.

- Read more at [What to Pack in Your First Aid Kit for long Term Travel](#)

6. Mosquitos and Disease



We certainly aren't fans of being ill on the road, so we work hard at avoiding sickness and injury by using preventative measures.

When it comes to Dengue Fever and Malaria (mosquito-born diseases) covering up is the best prevention.

Even in the hot jungle, we wear lightweight long sleeve shirts and pants.

Often times insect repellent doesn't work, but being covered from head to toe makes all the difference.

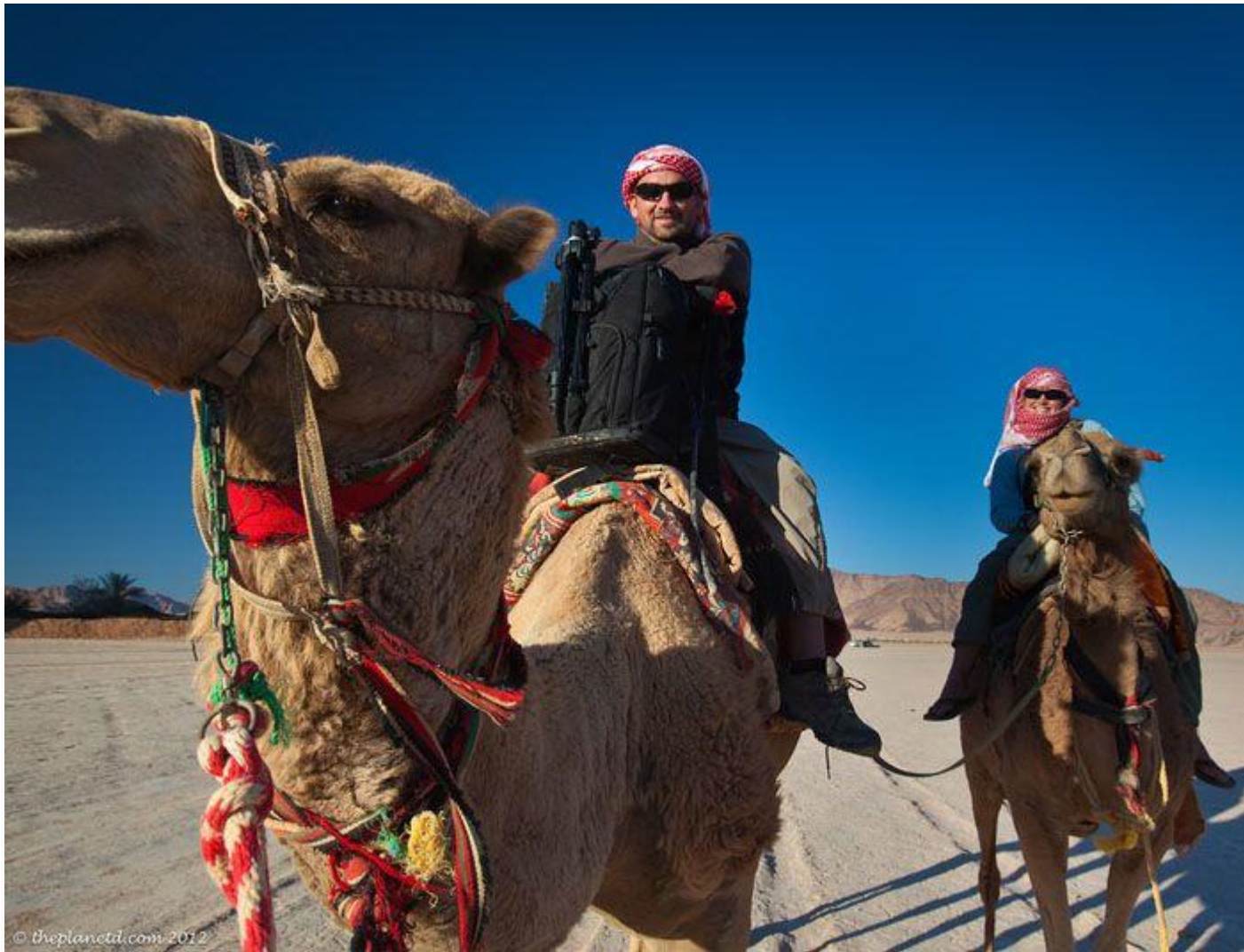
You can also carry a mosquito net of your own, they are portable and easy to use.

Many lodges offer mosquito nets to use, but we find they always have holes in them. Bring your own and you'll have a mosquito-free night.

On another note, **it is still advisable to bring and use insect repellent, just don't completely rely on it.**

Staying covered up helps a lot. We've even used bug jackets with a mesh face in extreme situations.

7. Heat and Sun



When out in the hot sun, we wear a hat and cover-up under lightweight clothing. I prefer long shirts and sarongs more than slathering on sunscreen every hour.

Be careful not to stay out too long. So many people land in the tropics directly from winter weather and sit outside for hours on end ruining their vacation. Sit under an umbrella or cover-up.

Fabrics these days are so light and comfortable it feels good being in the sun with long sleeves on.

8. Water Purification

Also, make sure to stay hydrated.

When it's hot, you lose a lot of water from sweat and you may not notice you are dehydrated. This can cause heatstroke and be very serious. On a side note, be careful not to over-hydrate.

While cycling through Sudan, I sweat faster than I could drink water and the more I drank, the more I flushed the nutrients out of my system.

I developed symptoms of hypo-hydration causing my entire body to cramp up, If you sweat a lot, drink liquids containing electrolytes like Gatorade.

This will keep you hydrated while giving your system the nutrients it needs.

Use a Steripen to purify your water.

9. Keep Hydrated



And on the note of dehydration be careful when it comes to water.

We all get a little lazy when traveling and start asking for ice in our drinks. Don't do it unless you are completely sure.

Tips to Stay hydrated when traveling

1. **Dave was so violently ill in Vietnam after going gaga for their ice tea** that I thought I'd have to rush him to the

hospital. He was stuck in a bungalow glued to the toilet for 5-days in Mui Né, A beautiful beach town where we should have been enjoying fun in the sand and surf. Now if he would have drunk hot tea made from water that has been boiled, he would have been ok.

2. **Hot drinks are a good choice. Or go for sealed bottled drinks and cans.** Also instead of constantly using plastic bottles and being wasteful, bring a portable water filtration system with you. They've come a long way baby, and you can filter any water from lakes and rivers to city water faucets. It helps you feel better about the environment while taking care of yourself.
3. **Purify your Water.** When in situations where you can't filter water or buy bottled water, purification tablets work. We drank purified water while cycling through Africa from Cairo to Cape Town. We purified our water all the way up to Everest Base Camp and the summit of Kilimanjaro. They work well and if you let it sit long enough, you don't even taste the chemical process. If you do taste it, a little-powdered juice will take make it taste great.

10. Food

And that brings us to food. We've talked about illnesses and vomiting and sometimes it is unavoidable. You are going to get sick when you travel at one point or another.

Dave had the worst food poisoning after eating dinner at a very expensive hotel in Cairo and I was sick all the way home from a previous trip to Peru after eating a burger at a popular American food chain.

It can happen anywhere!

We always say, when in doubt, if it isn't boiled, baked or peeled don't eat it.

Salads can be oh so delicious in hot climates, but unwashed lettuce or lettuce washed in contaminated water will make you sick. Stick to fruit that can be peeled like bananas, oranges and mangos and if you choose to eat street food, make sure it is cooked properly.

Pro Tip: *When choosing a place to eat, look for eateries that are packed with local people. Chances are good that the food will be fresh. Because of the high turnover, they'll be constantly cooking that food, and because the locals are eating there, you can bet it's authentic and affordable.*

11. Jet Lag



Everyone is always asking us about how we combat jet lag.

When you only have a week or two for your vacation, the last thing you want to feel is exhausted for 3 or 4 days of your trip!

Jet lag is a tough one as it's almost impossible to beat completely. But there are ways to ease into the time zone that you are flying to. We have little tricks that we do when we fly.