



# Pre Travel Health Assessment for OHNs

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## Abstract

Worldwide 1.1 billion people traveled internationally in 2014. Eighteen to 50% were business travelers who also face occupational and work exposures. Sleep disorders and substance abuse is common with extensive travel and business travel has been associated with poorer health: higher BMI, higher BP and BS, higher stress on spouses and children.



## Introduction

Business travelers have approximately 2 weeks notice of impending travel and make about 3 international trips per year. Most frequent destinations are India, China and South Africa.

75% recognize importance of vaccination  
 25% follow food and fluid precautions  
 16% comply with antimalarial chemoprophylaxis  
 90% had Tdap, Hepatitis A, YF, Typhoid, Malaria prophylaxis

### 49% declined flu vaccine



- Important: influenza somewhere on the planet all year long.
- Air travel transmission well documented.
- Flu vaccine especially important for these business travelers:
  - Chronic medical conditions
  - Age 50+
  - Attending large gatherings

## Clinician Communication Strategies

- Encourage the traveler's involvement at the outset and throughout the discussion.
- Provide unbiased information about risks and benefit options, including doing nothing.
- Provide well structured and understandable information.
- Engage in shared decision making.
- Rehearse likely scenarios and provide support as necessary.

Role of the OHN Travel Health Specialist	Ask Traveler About Self	Ask Traveler About Immunization and Travel History	Ask Traveler About Trip
Monitor global health epidemiology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Age, gender, place of birth</li> <li>• Previous travel, frequency, future travel</li> </ul>	Routine vaccines Travel vaccines	Exact Itinerary For how long
Monitor public health recommendations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Medical history</li> <li>• Surgical history</li> <li>• Last dental visit</li> <li>• Last eye exam</li> </ul>	History of Guillain-Barre	Season of travel Time to departure
Provide customized care to travelers based upon assessment, health risks, current standards of care, activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pregnancy/risks</li> <li>• Breastfeeding</li> <li>• Zika Exposure</li> </ul>	Prior travel experience with malaria prophylaxis	For what purpose What types of activities
Educate travelers about health risks and prevention measures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Medications: Rx, OTC, herbal, injectable</li> <li>• Allergies</li> </ul>	Experience with altitude	Independent travel or planned tour
Vaccinate Against Preventable Disease	Stress Assess: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Current stressors (aging parents, illness in family, recent bereavement, trauma)</li> <li>• Hx of eating disorders, self-harm, alcohol or drug misuse</li> <li>• Sx of panic attacks, anxiety, OCD</li> <li>• Psychological treatment, counseling, antidepressants</li> </ul>	Illnesses related to prior travel	Adventurous eating

## Ask Business Traveler About Type of Work

- Office, factory or mine?
- PPE requirements?
- Indoor or outdoor?
- Type of work and duration
- Longer trip = more risk and immunizations vary
- Travel destination hazards such as security concerns, natural disasters, infectious diseases, climate extremes, mosquito borne illness
- Timing of the trip: can the trip be postponed to a time of less risk: after elections, the rainy season or disease outbreaks?

## Ask Business Traveler About Shot Records

- Call Mom
- School and College records
- Military Records
- State Records
- Vaccine Receipts



## Protect Business Travelers

- Is the trip business critical?
- Are there virtual options to obtain the desired outcome?
- What are the employee or family concerns?
- Can these concerns be addressed by preventive options ie insect repellent, clothing, etc.?
- Can this trip be postponed until the issue is controlled?
- Can an employee with lower risk profile make the trip?
- Is the employee planning a pregnancy in the near future?



## Remind Business Travelers of Basics

- Handwashing
- Hotel and Personal Safety
- Preventing Bug Bites
- Avoiding all Animals
- Sunscreen Use
- Shunning Blood and BF Exposure

### Risk #1 :Motor Vehicle Accidents

Do Not drink and drive. Wear seat belts. Follow local traffic laws. Wear helmets when riding bikes, motorcycles, and motor bikes. Look both ways when crossing the street. Hire a licensed local driver, when possible; in authorized taxis only! Avoid night driving.

### Risk #2 :Drowning

Avoid alcohol, swim only in well-chlorinated pools; life-jackets, use a reliable company for snorkeling, boating, rafting, sailing. Go with a buddy. Avoid fresh water swimming: schistosomiasis (snails transmitted in fresh water) and leptospirosis (bacterial illness).

- **Medical assistance insurance CRITICAL**
- **Access to Western standards of care**
- **24/7 coverage**
- **Insuremytrip.com or worldnomad.com**
- **International SOS**
- **STEP free service of US to its traveling citizens**  
<https://step.state.gov/step/>

## Transition Business Traveler Back to Life and Work at Home

Time for rest and resuming a normal sleep cycle  
 Time to reconnect with family  
 Time to wrap up unfinished business  
 Time to manage work activity at the home location  
 Consider if work specific medical surveillance is needed  
 Consider if traveler needs medical care for symptoms that arose during travel or afterwards



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