

Passport to Health

[Announcer] This podcast is presented by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. CDC – safer, healthier people.

[Announcer] CDC-TV Presents: Health Matters.

[Kirsten Tekula] It's the greatest adventure. There's nothing like meeting new people and seeing new places and tasting new food.

[Announcer] There are some health risks for anyone who travels to foreign lands, especially in developing nations. Your chances of illness or injuries drop substantially with good planning.

[Dr. Gary Brunette] The first one, which is probably the most important, is to arrange to see a travel medicine specialist.

[Dr. Nina Marano] A visit to the health care provider can make all the difference in whether you're going to have safe and happy travel.

[Announcer] Many diseases are easily preventable with vaccinations. This includes seasonal influenza, H1N1, updated routine vaccinations, and any special vaccinations recommended by your travel health adviser.

[Kirsten Tekula] I realized that there were a whole series of vaccinations that I needed.

[Announcer] Learn about the health risks at your destinations and what vaccinations you may need at the CDC's Traveler's Health web site.

[Dr. Felipe Lobelo] I think the most important, critical part of it is getting aware of what's going on, having the information about the things that you need to do to prevent getting infected and also have a plan to act accordingly if you get infected.

[Announcer] Travelers should get all routine medicines and may need to get additional medicines for travel to some regions of the globe.

[Dr. Phyllis Kozarsky] It's important that people bring along enough medications so that they are not in a position to try to find them when they're overseas.

[Dr. Gary Brunette] It would include some over-the-counter medications, such as pain relievers, anti-histamines, decongestants, for example.

[Kirsten Tekula] I realized that I needed special medication for malaria.

[Dr. Nina Marano] These drugs are not over-the-counter, they can only be given by prescription, and importantly, most of them have to be started before you actually get to your location.

[Gary Brunette] We encourage travelers to put together a small, travel health kit.

[Dr. Phyllis Kozarsky] When people are going to areas where insects transmit diseases, we're very careful to tell people to bring insect repellent with them.

[Dr. Nina Marano] And of course, a way to clean your skin, so hand gels are extremely important and band-aids and first-aid equipment is very, very important.

[Dr. Gary Brunette] Very often, including sunscreen is very useful.

[Dr. Nina Marano] We think of all of these exotic diseases that people can get but really insect bites and sunburn, and then you want to have something like an Imodium or a Loperamide for traveler's diarrhea.

[Announcer] Travel health experts advise that you purchase travel insurance and medical evacuation insurance prior to international travel.

[Dr. Gary Brunette] Evacuation costs are particularly high and they can vary.

[Dr. Nina Marano] If you get sick abroad that ship, or if you get sick in a foreign port, how are you going to find your way home? It's extremely important to consider medical evacuation insurance and travel insurance.

[Kirsten Tekula] So I made a point of going ahead, biting the bullet, and spending the extra money for that. And even though I never had to use it, it was money very well spent.

[Dr. Nina Marano] And it gives just peace, just peace of mind.

[Dr. Phyllis Kozarsky] People need to consider not only their tickets and their passports, but also their health.

[Kirsten Tekula] You want an adventure you don't want problems.

[Announcer] For the most accurate health information, visit www.cdc.gov or call 1-800-CDC-INFO, 24/7.