



Travel health update

Travel health can be complicated, and advice for health professionals and travellers is ever-changing. In this regular feature, Jane Chiodini seeks out and presents the latest travel advice and information to help you keep your practice up to date. She also revisits areas of on-going concern, for spot checks and further clarification

WORLD MALARIA DAY AND UK MALARIA DATA

With half the world's population still at risk of malaria it's important we still continue to raise awareness of this almost completely preventable but potentially fatal condition. To mark World Malaria Day on 25 April, the World Health Organization published an interesting, 4-minute film on YouTube, that addresses key facts about malaria, including global epidemiology, symptoms, diagnosis, treatment, and main ways of preventing transmission and spread of the disease - see <http://tinyurl.com/kd2rqaw>.

Public Health England has also published its annual malaria figures, which showed there was an overall increase of 9% in imported malaria infections reported in the UK in 2013 (1,501) compared with 2012 (1,378), with seven deaths. The majority of cases (79%) were caused by the potentially fatal *Plasmodium falciparum* with most being acquired in West Africa. Where a reason for travel was known, 80% had visited family in their country of origin, many had not taken any chemoprophylaxis and the majority returned to London. The PHE press statement¹ recommends those providing advice should engage with these

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populations whenever possible, including occasions outside a travel health consultation such as during new patient checks or childhood immunisation appointments. The PHE Malaria Reference Laboratory is also working with the African Diaspora Action Against Malaria (ADAAM) to address this issue - see their facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/Adaam.EU>.

1. PHE Press statement. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/public-health-england-reminds-travellers-about-the-risks-of-malaria>

ARE YOU A FOOTBALL FAN?

This will make you laugh. In my last travel clinic I saw a gentleman who was travelling to Brazil, going to Manaus and Rio de Janeiro and a few places inbetween for a three week trip. That's nice, I said, and what are you doing while there? 'I'm going for the football, of course,' he replied! He was the first traveller I'd seen going for the World Cup and not being a football fan I think I'd disengaged from the topic! Such travellers have presented us with more of a challenge if travelling to areas at risk for yellow fever and malaria, to say nothing of the advice we will to give on safety and security and especially travellers diarrhoea. I discussed with him prevention of this, the most common

illness reported in international travellers especially when travelling from a high income country to a low income region where hygiene and sanitary infrastructure may be less robust, along with the importance of dehydration and use of rehydration solution. He had heard such management was also useful for hangovers which I couldn't deny, but linked this back into reinforcement of personal behaviour! NaTHNaC provide some good information plus links to other resources - I like the FCO video the best at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i0wTYG5Qxco>. So although the 2014 World Cup is nearly upon us (12 June), I hope you don't get too many turning up last minute for travel advice!

TRAVEL RECORD CARDS

Are you facing more of a challenge to obtain travel record cards or, if they are available, finding that some don't quite fit the bill? There's a handy app now for travel vaccine records for those wanting to keep everything electronically, which is free of charge to download - go to <http://www.travellingwell.com.au/vaccinerecord.html> for more details. I decided to create my own record card, just as a one page document, but with the detail filled in as much as possible to save me time when completing them within the consultation. I think it still important to pass this information to the traveller to enable them to take more care of their health needs. My new form can be found on <http://www.janechiodini.co.uk/tools/> and go to item 15. While you're there look also at item 14, some new bravery certificates again designed so you need to fill in as little as possible. Finding similar images in black and white that are copyright free has so far eluded me, so if you know of any, please get in touch! ●