

Travel health update



Reports that mosquito-borne diseases have emerged in new parts of the world mean there needs to be more emphasis on bite prevention. *Jane Chiodini* also highlights new resources for patients who may have been bitten by a bat and talks about her first project as Dean of the Faculty of Travel Medicine

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QUICKFIRE UPDATES

The Indian state of Rajasthan has been upgraded to high risk for ZIKV transmission and Dengue has been seen in France and Spain. Awareness and knowledge of mosquito bite prevention is necessary but travellers going to Europe don't usually seek travel advice from a GP surgery so we need to highlight risks by other means – possibly leaflets in a waiting room: don't forget the one produced by Public Health England at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/mosquito-bite-avoidance-for-travellers> TRAVAX has updated its recommendations for Japanese encephalitis vaccine on its country specific database and refreshed the Altitude and Travel information both on TRAVAX and its public site fitfortravel at <https://www.fitfortravel.nhs.uk/advice/general-travel-health-advice/altitude-and-travel>. NaTHNaC has published a new factsheet on sun protection found on TravelHealthPro at <https://travelhealthpro.org.uk/factsheet/23/>

sun-protection ... apart from all this, the 'travel scene' has been quiet over the past few weeks – no further Green Book changes.

USEFUL VACCINE-RELATED RESOURCES

While not travel health, other resources have been published over the past month to help you generally in your day-to-day practice. For example, download the 'Visual guide to vaccines' poster which provides images of the vaccines including their names and packaging and the ages they would be administered in our national immunisation programme. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/a-visual-guide-to-vaccines-poster>

Public Health England has produced very useful information for individuals who have been bitten by a bat at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/rabies-risks-from-bat-bites/information-for-individuals-who-have-been-bitten-by-a-bat>. This includes a helpful leaflet found directly at <https://publichealthengland-immunisati.app.box.com/s/l20owjmkk7w2luxk40ys3yfcgk2b788>

This information addresses details for anyone bitten by a bat either in the UK or abroad, gives medical advice and the webpage includes extremely helpful details of phone lines to ring in England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales. The leaflet explains risks from contact with a bat to the general public, what they should do, treatment required and also includes information for health professionals. The publication (product code 400321BT) is also available to order from the Publications orderline at https://www.orderline.dh.gov.uk/ecom_dh/public/home.jsf

'Vaccines and porcine gelatine' is a leaflet describing how and why porcine gelatine is used in vaccines for immunisation programmes and has recently been updated at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/vaccines-and-porcine-gelatine>.

Porcine gelatine (coming from collagen in pigs) is used in vaccines as a stabiliser – to ensure that the vaccine remains safe and effective during storage. The leaflet explains the views of faith communities – specifically British Muslim and Jewish communities – and also describes the range of vaccines and identifies whether there are alternatives for three specific vaccines (MMR, shingles and Fluenz Tetra).

A NEW ERA

At the beginning of October I was inaugurated as the Dean of the Faculty of Travel Medicine of the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Glasgow – see 'Double first for our travel columnist' at <http://www.practicenurse.co.uk/index.php?p1=news&p2=1754> – having been elected for a three year tenure. It feels a huge privilege to take up this honorary post as a nurse in a medical Royal College and is certainly the first time the Faculty has had a nurse (and female) in the position. My passion for travel medicine will help to drive standards and education and I hope as time progresses this will become more evident. Later in November we will be launching a free access module on female genital mutilation (FGM) in relation to travel consultations. The e-learning creates an educational tool that supports travel health practitioners to address FGM consistently, in accordance with guidance and the law. It explores the practical aspects of raising the topic of FGM in a travel consultation; the challenges and barriers that exist and how some practitioners have overcome them; includes useful tips for practice and advice on how processes within practice can facilitate this. I'll provide details of the link in next month's update but in the meantime log on to my Facebook page for immediate news of its launch at <https://www.facebook.com/TravelHealthTraining> ♦