**Medical Guidelines for Healthy Travel to Uganda**

**Disclaimer: Please note the recommendations below are not a substitute for consulting your own GP or travel clinic, but should be used in conjunction with their advice.**

**Basic Health and Hygiene**

One of the most debilitating conditions when travelling is **diarrhoea.**

Observe basic hygiene precautions, wash your hands well with soap and water before eating, where that is not possible use an alcohol based cleansing gel (like those used in hospitals) which are readily available in chemists.

The best means of prevention is to avoid any questionable foods or beverages.

Do not drink tap water unless it has been boiled, filtered, or chemically disinfected. Do not drink unbottled beverages or drinks with ice. Always make sure that soda bottles are opened in front of you as people have been known to  refill them with home made drinks.

Do not eat fruits or vegetables unless they have been peeled or cooked – bananas are a great option. Avoid cooked foods that are no longer piping hot. Cooked foods that have been left at room temperature are particularly hazardous. Avoid unpasteurized milk and any products that might have been made from unpasteurized milk, such as ice cream. Avoid food and beverages obtained from street vendors. Do not eat raw or undercooked meat or fish.

If in doubt it is perfectly acceptable to explain that your stomach is not used to different foods and would they mind if you didn’t eat this time.

**First Aid**

A basic first aid kit can be purchased from any chemist shop but for travel to Uganda it is advisable to include the following:

* Mosquito repellent
* Malaria tablets
* Pain killers
* Antiseptic cream/gel, Plasters
* Wet wipes
* Sun cream – High factor at least 15 – 20
* Anti-diarrhoea tablets
* Iodine tablets
* Ear plugs (optional)
* If you use prescribed medicine, you must take enough to last the time you will spend in Africa
* Syringes and needles in case they are needed when you go to very remote places

**Medical Kit**

We have a small global survival medical kit in the Diocesan Office which can be borrowed for official trips to Uganda. Please note that anything that is used must be replaced on return so that the next users are covered. contact Chris Dobson if you would like to borrow the kit.

Tel: 01179060100

**Hospital treatment in the event of emergency**

In Kampala there are two medical practices/clinics that operate on international health standards:

1.      The Surgery ([www.thesurgeryuganda.org](http://www.thesurgeryuganda.org/))

2.      The International Hospital Kampala.  The International Hospital Kampala is part of the International Medical Group and they are expanding their family of clinics throughout the country.

We recommend travel health insurance that includes medical evacuation (for emergencies) and repatriation of remains in the event of an untimely death.  Both the Surgery and the IHK can arrange for medical evacuations. **(Information about hospitals taken from Church of Uganda website recommendations.)**

**Malaria**

There are two main prophylactic options to consider:

1. **Malarone** (Atovaquone/proguanil) is taken once daily with food starting two days before arrival and continuing through the trip and for seven days after departure. Side-effects, which are typically mild, may include abdominal pain, nausea, vomiting, headache, diarrhea, or dizziness. Serious adverse reactions are rare. ***With  effect from 2014 generic versions of Malarone are available from pharmacies without prescription and at much lower prices.***
2. **Doxycycline** is effective, but may cause an exaggerated sunburn reaction, which limits its usefulness in the tropics.

In the unlikely event you are offered **Mefloquine / Lariam** be aware that it has a very high level of unpleasant side effects that can be permanent.

Malaria is a killer and it is essential that everyone traveling to Uganda is very careful to take appropriate preventative measures. If you fall ill when you return to the UK please make sure your GP knows you have been in Uganda as Malaria can mimic many other conditions

**Travel Insurance**

One of the hardest things to sort out sometimes is getting insurance to cover visitors from Uganda to the UK. **Salt Insurance** offers specialist insurance for church groups and individuals travelling overseas. **They will also offer cover for visitors from Uganda to this country for the same premium** – at the time of writing ca. £24 per person for fourteen days. The only proviso is that they will only issue insurance once the traveller has been granted a UK visa.

For more info visit their [website](http://www.saltinsurance.com)

See also:

**The Essential Guide to Travelling with a Medical Condition**
<http://www.insurancewith.com/travelling-with-a-medical-condition/>

**Vaccinations**

The following list of vaccinations was recommended in October 2008, but travelers should always check with their nearest Travel Clinic or GP for the latest recommendations. An up to date map and recommendations can be viewed on the [Interhealth website](https://www.interhealthworldwide.org/home/around-the-world/interhealth-world-map/?selectcountryregion=uganda&x=10&y=15)

**Hepatitis A**Recommended for all travelers

**Typhoid**Recommended for all travelers

**Yellow fever**Required for all travellers from 2016 following a Yellow Fever outbreak in the Masaka district of Southern Uganda, but check with Interhealth for any changes – see below for contact details. Note that the current advice is that Yellow fever vaccination is effective for 35 years, so even if your certificate has passed its ten year expiry date it will still be valid.

**Polio**
One-time booster recommended for any adult traveler who completed the childhood series but never had polio vaccine as an adult

**Meningococcus**
Recommended for all travelers to northern Uganda

**Hepatitis B**
For travelers who may have intimate contact with local residents, especially if visiting for more than 6 months

**Rabies**For travelers who may have direct contact with animals and may not have access to medical care, check with your GP whether this is necessary

**Measles, mumps, rubella (MMR)**Two doses recommended for all travelers born after 1956, if not previously given

**Tetanus-diphtheria**
Revaccination recommended every 10 years

**Other resources**

The [Interhealth](http://www.interhealth.org.uk/aboutinterhealth.htm) website is a good source of information, advice and has an online shop for basic first aid kits, etc.

**The Essential Guide to Travelling with a Medical Condition**
<http://www.insurancewith.com/travelling-with-a-medical-condition/>

(This web based resource gives valuable advice on how to travel safely with a medical condition and how to ensure that you are properly ensured.)

**Books to read:**

1. Berlitz Travel Health Pocket Guide 2007 by Dr Ted Lankester
For short-term overseas workers and travelers
2. The Traveler’s Good Health Guide by Dr Ted Lankester (Sheldon Press 2006)
For long-term overseas workers and travelers