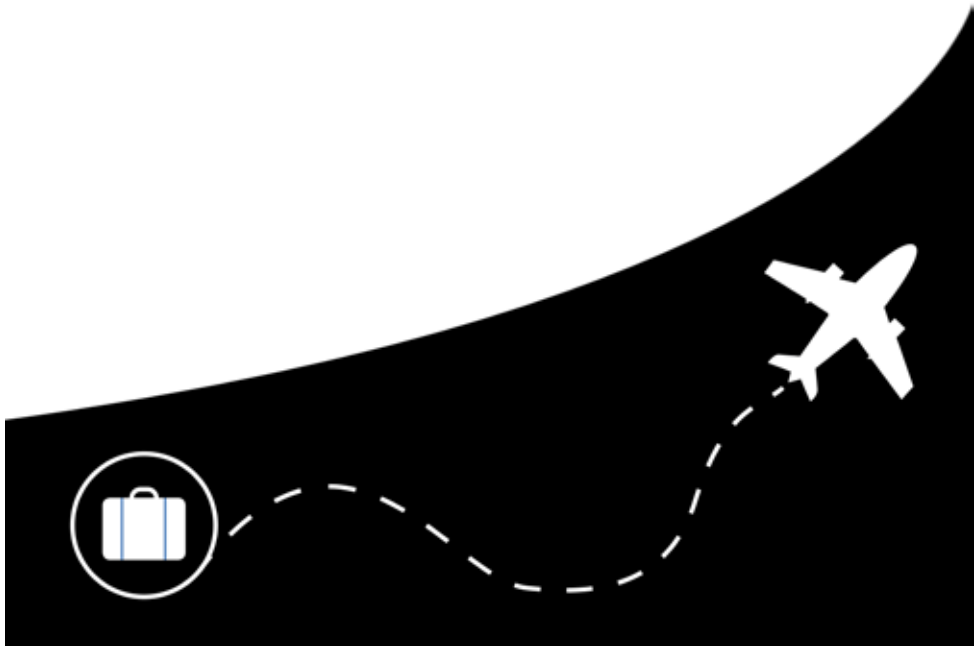


# Travelling and your medicines

Information for patients



## Are you planning a trip soon?

This leaflet should provide you with the information you need to help you to travel safely with your medicines and make sure that your holiday does not get in the way of your health!

Avoid the stress of running out of medicines when you are travelling. It may be very difficult to get hold of supplies once you have left the UK.

- Plan ahead and make sure you have enough supply before you leave.
- Carry **extra supplies**. Always carry more than you need – delays can happen!
- Carry your medicines in your **hand luggage**. This will help to minimize the risk of them getting lost or stolen.
- You may want to carry a copy of your prescription or have a letter from your doctor which states that the medicines you are carrying are for a long term medical condition.
- Ask your pharmacist for a weekly or daily medication box if this would be useful.

### **If you do run out of medicines:**

Find a local HIV clinic and they should be able to help. If necessary we will be able to provide them with a letter by fax or email to show your regular medicines. We will not be able to send your medicines to your destination unless you arrange and pay for a courier.

## What time?

You will hopefully be in a good routine for taking your medicines. For example you might always take it around 10pm every evening. However when you are travelling in different time zones this may mean that this time is now 4am! There are several ways to help you take your medicines at the right time. This will make sure they keep working.

We would suggest that in your new destination you continue to take your medicines at the usual time you take them at home:

- For example, take it at 10pm in UK and take it at 10pm (local time) in the destination country. Simple!
- On return, just switch back to UK time.
- You may find that doing this means that you take two doses closer together or there is a long gap between doses. If you usually take your tablets every day the risk of developing resistance will be very low.
- **If you take your tablets twice daily; do not double up on doses.**

Other plans are often very complicated but if you would like to know more about these please ask your pharmacist.

If you travel frequently between time zones please speak to your pharmacist for advice on what to do to reduce the risk of resistance developing.

Make sure jet lag doesn't get in the way of you taking your medicine at the right time – set an alarm or do whatever it takes to make sure you don't miss doses!



## Avoiding malaria

**Be aware** – are you travelling to a malaria prone area? If the answer is yes, it is very important to take the proper precautions.

**Don't know?** Just ask! Or visit: [www.fitfortravel.nhs.uk](http://www.fitfortravel.nhs.uk) for more information about malaria prevention (prophylaxis) where you will be travelling.

### General tips:

- Cover up, particularly at dawn and dusk when the mosquitoes are more prone to biting.
- Use a mosquito repellent which contains DEET (at least 30%).

### DID YOU KNOW?

If you have lived in a country which is prone to malaria but have been in the UK for more than 6 months you may no longer be immune. This means you should take anti-malaria tablets.

If you develop a fever or you are unwell up to 1 year after you return, **especially within three months of return** contact a doctor as soon as possible.

**! Malaria needs to be treated promptly or it could be fatal.**

### ANTI-MALARIA TABLETS

- Take anti-malaria tablets if necessary (see table overleaf). Take them regularly and continue taking for the whole course as directed by the pharmacist/doctor.

### Speak to your pharmacist if you:

- are pregnant or breastfeeding
- have any other medical conditions, including if you take any other medicines
- are unsure about *any* aspect of malaria treatment.

<b>Anti-malaria drug</b>	<b>Points to consider</b>	<b>Interactions with ARVs</b>	<b>Prescription type</b>
chloroquine (Avloclor®)/ Nivaquine®/proguanil (Paludrine®)	Preferably start taking one week before travel to country and for four weeks upon return	Check with your doctor/ pharmacist about taking chloroquine with rilpivirine (also in Eviplera®).	<b>Available to buy from community pharmacies/Private prescription</b>
Doxycycline	Makes skin sensitive to the sun so you are more likely to burn (even if you have black skin). Sun screen should be used.  Preferably start taking one week before travel to country and for four weeks upon return.	Nevirapine/Efavirenz (also in Atripla®) may reduce effect of doxycycline but this is not considered to be significant.	<b>Private prescription only</b>
Mefloquine	May cause drowsiness, vivid dreams and mood changes.  Preferably start taking two to three weeks before travel to country and for four weeks upon return.	Protease Inhibitors (PIs) e.g. atazanavir/darunavir etc) may increase the risk of side effects of mefloquine.	<b>Private prescription only</b>
Atovaquone/proguanil (Malarone®)	May cause rash.  Preferably start taking one week before travel to country and for one week upon return.	Levels of atovaquone may be decreased if taking PIs (e.g. atazanavir/darunavir, etc.) or efavirenz/nevirapine and therefore we generally do not recommend using together.	<b>Private prescription only</b>

## General advice

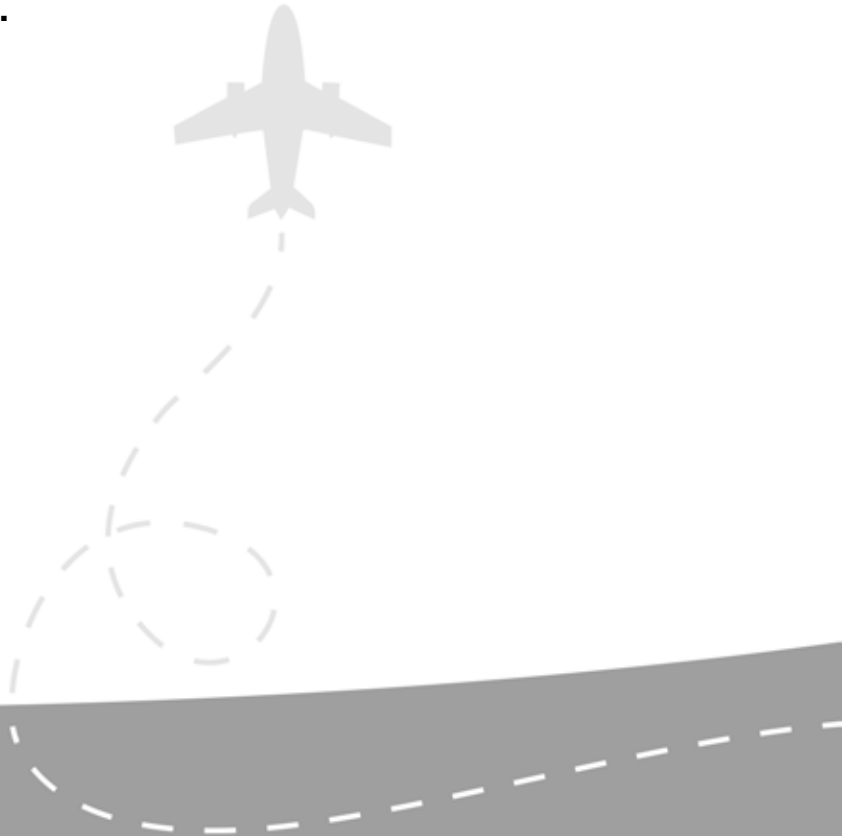
When travelling to other countries you may be at risk of other infections, including travellers' diarrhoea.

The best ways to avoid this are to:

- Always **wash your hands** before eating.
- Avoid ice cubes and tap water, in some countries it is recommended to only **drink bottled/boiled water**.
- If necessary take extra precautions on which foods to eat – check the advice for the specific country you will be visiting.

### Safe sex

Protect yourself from sexually transmitted infections: if you are having sex with a new partner while you are away **always use a condom**.



## Holiday medicines

Which holiday medicines are safe to take with your anti-retrovirals?

- **Antihistamines** – cetirizine and loratadine are safe to be taken with your anti-retroviral medicines. The effects of Piriton® (chlorphenamine) may be increased with protease inhibitors (PI's) e.g. atazanavir, darunavir, Kaletra® etc. so you may become more drowsy.
- **Pain killers/anti-fever medicines** – paracetamol and ibuprofen are safe to take.
- **Anti-diarrhoeals** – Loperamide (Imodium®, Arret®) and rehydration sachets can be used.

Double check that it is safe to take other medicines (*including herbal and alternative medicines*) to avoid getting side effects and to ensure your medicines keep working properly.

**Storage: Don't expose your medicines to direct sunlight. Keep them in a cool, dry place.** They could be stored in the glove box of your car or in a cool, dark cupboard.



# Vaccines

You may need to think about vaccinations before you travel. You will need to check which vaccines are needed for the country you are travelling to. The following information is only for guidance and we recommend you speak to your doctor.

If you are HIV positive you should **check with your doctor before being given** the following vaccines:

- **Yellow fever**

If you require a yellow fever certificate for entry to a country, you can obtain a yellow fever vaccine *waiver certificate* from centres which provide the vaccines. Some countries will require this (e.g. Nigeria/Tanzania). A letter of exemption from your doctor may be acceptable. Some doctors may advise you to have this vaccine if your CD4 count is greater than 200-350 and your viral load is undetectable.

- **MMR** (*measles, mumps, rubella*)

This vaccine can be given if your CD4 count is greater than 200. Check with your doctor.

- **Varicella (chicken pox)**

- **ORAL typhoid vaccine**

Vaccines which are safe to be given to people with HIV include:

- *Hepatitis A and B*
- *Meningococcus*
- *Pneumococcus*
- *Polio*
- *Rabies*
- *Tetanus*
- *Typhoid*
- *Japanese encephalitis*
- *Tick borne encephalitis*



## MEDICAL TREATMENT ON HOLIDAY

**Travelling within the UK:** You are entitled to free NHS care. Go to the nearest emergency department or be seen at a GP surgery as a temporary resident.

**Travelling within Europe:** You can get a European Health Insurance Card (EHIC) which will entitle you to free/reduced cost healthcare. You will have to pay any local costs which would normally be charged to local residents from their own pockets or health insurance.

### **Travel insurance:**

We would recommend that you take out travel insurance **before** you travel. You should inform your insurer of your pre-existing medical conditions. If you do not let your insurer know about your HIV status and you need to make a claim, your policy will not be valid; even if the illness is unrelated to your HIV infection.

There are a number of insurance companies which provide specific HIV travel cover. Examples of these include: World First Travel Insurance, It's So Easy Travel Insurance, Unique Insurance and Freedom insurance. There will be other companies who provide cover – check what each policy will cover before deciding which one to choose.

**Be prepared! Research the area you are going to and make sure you have the cover you need.**



## FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

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If you need an interpreter or need a document in another language, large print, Braille or audio version, please call **01865 221473** or email **PALSJR@ouh.nhs.uk**

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