

How to Prepare for Your Travel Consult

Welcome to the Bowdoin College Travel Health Clinic. There is much you can do to improve the quality of your travel experience and prevent unwanted illness and injury. To expedite the consult process we encourage you to consider the following issues **prior** to your appointment:



- ◆ This appointment is a travel health consult. Its' purpose is to review health risks based on your destination and travel activities. This is not a physical and can't be combined with a physical even when one is required by your program. Please schedule a separate appointment for physical exams and any required lab testing or x-rays.
- ◆ Please complete the travel history form and return to Health Services **at least 24 hours** prior to your appointment. This can be done in person or electronically. You will be asked to reschedule if forms are turned in too late.
- ◆ Providing as much information as possible about your itinerary will help in making decisions about vaccines and medications. Include departure cities, layover destinations, and activities during your stay. Think about side trips, accommodations, work or study plans. Are you spending time with underserved groups such as orphans or prisoners? Are you visiting or working with animals or in a medical clinic/hospital or school? Is this a vacation, business trip, study abroad program, personal family visit, service /disaster relief or mission trip?
- ◆ If you are traveling to a malarial area there are several medication choices to help prevent transmission of this disease. Medications can be costly and some have side effects worth considering. Please think about which you might choose and how you will pay for it. We will talk about country specific recommendations at the time of your visit. The following link has excellent information: <http://www.cdc.gov/malaria/travelers/drugs.html>
- ◆ Prescriptions for travel medicines and any of your own routine medications may require a "travel extension" from your insurance company to cover amounts exceeding a 30 or 90 day supply. Please talk with your insurance company about any restrictions ahead of time so you can plan for this expense. If you use a mail order pharmacy please bring the contact information with you to your appointment.
- ◆ Vaccines are often recommended and can be quite costly, sometimes several hundred dollars. Many health insurance plans do not cover this expense. **Payment is expected at the time of your appointment.** The college accepts credit cards, checks or charges may be put on your student bill. We will provide a receipt which can be used for reimbursement if your insurance covers vaccines. Sometimes certain programs will cover vaccine costs. If you have financial aid there may be additional resources. Please check with your family, travel program and financial aid about resources and payment choice before your appointment.
- ◆ Vaccines require time for the body to develop immunity. It is advisable to schedule vaccines a minimum of two weeks before departure. Some vaccines require several doses and the series needs to be completed before departure for optimal immunity. In the case of yellow fever vaccine, you may be required to show documentation of vaccination (the Yellow Card) along with your passport to enter a country. Without this you may be denied entry or placed in quarantine for a week or more. **This is the reason we recommend making a travel consult appointment 4-6 weeks before departure** if possible.