Travel Medicine
Preparing Your Patient for Worldwide Travel

Fred Miser, MD
Residency Director
Professor of Family Medicine
Department of Family Medicine
The Ohio State University Wexner Medical Center

The Case of Mr. B

- 68 y/o recently retired accountant
- Hypertension – here for BP check
- Soon to celebrate 50th wedding anniversary – wants to “travel the world”
  - 2nd honeymoon dream of a lifetime
- Asks advice about the trip
- What do you do?
50 million US citizens travel abroad each year

For fun and relaxation....
For romance....

For adventure or business....
For humanitarian service....

**Ferdinand Magellan**
The First Worldwide Traveler
1521

Cebu, Philippines
Ferdinand Magellan
An Example of Disaster
April 27, 1521

Magnitude of International Travel

- 50% will become ill while abroad
- Only 28% of travelers obtain medical pre-travel advice - most think it is unnecessary
- Minor diseases can ruin vacations
- Other diseases (rare) can be deadly
- Prevention and Preparedness
Purposes of Presentation

- Provide pre-travel care
  - Focus on prevention
  - Traveler’s diarrhea
  - Malaria prophylaxis
  - Immunizations
- Post-travel care
- Frequently asked questions

What’s Needed For Travel Medicine

- Current info on travel advice and immunizations
  - computerized travelers’ health databases
    - e.g. TRAVAX
  - CDC on the Internet (www.cdc.gov/travel)
What’s Needed For Travel Medicine

- Adequate supply of immunizations
- Pharmacy that carries meds
- Reliable lab
- ID consultants
- Patient handouts

Components of Travel Medicine

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pre-Travel Care</th>
<th>The Trip</th>
<th>Post-Travel Care</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
Pre-Travel Care

- Ideally begun 8-12 weeks before travel
- assess travel risks
- complete required immunizations
- obtain necessary meds and medical supplies

Initial Visit

**The Who**

- Age (children, elderly)
- Gender (pregnancy)
- General health
  - Current med list
  - Allergies
  - Immune status
### Initial Visit

**The What**

- Reason for trip
- Length of stay
- Potential food sources
- Anticipated social activities
- Potential animal exposures

---

**The When**

- Departure date
- Season
- Day and night exposure activities
Initial Visit

**The Where**

- Countries (? developing)
- Sequence of itinerary
- Rural vs. urban
- ? off the “beaten” path
- Accommodations
- Access to quality medical care
- Climate and altitude

---

Initial Visit

**The How**

- Air travel
  - Jet lag, DVT, COPD
- Sea travel
  - motion sickness
- Overland travel
  - accidents
General Advice

- Accidents
- Health care and evacuation insurance
- Personal supplies
- Sun protection
- Food & water hygiene
- Proper clothing
- Insect repellents
- Freshwater swims
- Air travel
- STIs

Causes of Death in Travelers

2,643 deaths of US citizens abroad ‘75-84

- 65% occurred in those over age 55
- 70% occurred in men
- 59% died outside of hospitals
- Causes of death
  - 49% - cardiovascular
  - 22% - unintentional injuries
  - 1% - infections (malaria, typhoid, hep B)

Accidental Causes of Death


The Accidental Tourist

“Remember Princess Diana”
The Accidental Tourist

The Accidental Tourist
The Accidental Tourist

• Inadequate emergency services
  • trauma centers nonexistent
  • chances of dying in a MVA while traveling abroad are 7-18 times greater than in the US
  • 80% of US citizens dying abroad from injuries do so outside of a hospital

The Accidental Tourist

• Wear seat belts (if available)
• Don’t drink alcohol and drive or participate in water activities
• Become familiar with local motor vehicle laws
• Drive during daylight hours
• Avoid motorbikes and motorcycles
## Health Care Insurance

- Limitations in coverage by standard health care policies while abroad
  - no coverage at time of service
- Medicare does NOT cover medical expenses outside the US
  - Medicare Supplement Plan (C-J)
- Shop around for travel health care insurance

## Medical Evacuation Insurance

- Emergency evacuation may be desirable (and necessary)
- Evacuation costly - up to $100,000 for an air ambulance
- Most health plans don’t cover emergency evacuation
Food & Water Hygiene

• “Part of the secret of success is to eat what you like and let the food fight it out inside.” - Mark Twain

• 30-70% develop traveler’s diarrhea
• 98% of informed travelers make at least one dietary “mistake” while abroad

GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION OF HEPATITIS A VIRUS INFECTION
**Food Hygiene**

- “Cook it, peel it, boil it, or forget it”
- Wash hands thoroughly
- Risky foods
  - fresh vegetables, raw meat or seafood, unpeeled fruit, “tap” water, ice cubes, milk and dairy products, watermelon
- Ciguatera fish poisoning

---

**Traveler’s Diarrhea**

Beware of Meat Vendors
Traveler's Diarrhea
Beware of Condiments

“Don’t Drink the Water”
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Beware of the Ice</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><img src="image1.jpg" alt="Image of a group of people and boxes" /></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Traveler’s Diarrhea</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><img src="image2.jpg" alt="Image of a hut" /></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TP
## Traveler’s Diarrhea

- **Most common health problem**
- **Infectious**
  - Bacteria (85%), parasites (10%), viruses (5%)
  - *E. coli* most common cause worldwide
- Chemoprophylaxis not recommended
- **Early treatment**
  - oral rehydration
  - antimotility agents - Imodium AD
  - antibiotics for 1-3 days

---

## Traveler’s Diarrhea

- **Recommended antibiotics (1-3 days)**
  - ciprofloxacin 500 mg bid
  - levofloxacin 500 mg once
  - azithromycin 500 mg once
  - rifaximin 200 mg tid
- Seek care if dysentery occurs
Cruise Ships and Norwalk Virus

“Caribbean Cruise Ship Turns into Diarrhea Nightmare Vessel”

- Frequent cause of large outbreaks of acute gastroenteritis
- Prevention - wash hands frequently!
- “Green Pages” on CDC web site
  - “score cards” for hygiene aboard cruise lines

Image courtesy of the CDC/Photo credit: James Gathany
Avoid Insect Bites

- Avoid colognes and perfumes
- Wear proper clothing – minimize skin
  - Wear shoes
  - Long sleeves and pants
- Avoid outdoors during twilight
- Use insect repellants

Mosquito Nets

Image courtesy of the CDC
Malaria

- Prevention = #1
- Antimalarial chemoprophylaxis
  - chloroquine
  - Atovaquone-proguanil (Malarone ®)
  - doxycycline
  - mefloquine (Lariam ®)
  - primaquine
Immunizations

- “What shots do I need”
- Must balance risks vs benefits
- Properly document
- Most can be given simultaneously
- Avoid (if possible) live virus vaccines in pregnant or immunocompromised patients
### 3 Categories of Immunizations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Routine</th>
<th>Required by law</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Recommendations for everyone</td>
<td>Yellow fever</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dT or DTaP, IPV</td>
<td>(cholera)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 3 Categories of Immunizations

- Recommended based on destination
  - Typhoid
  - Hepatitis A
  - Others
    - hepatitis B, pneumovax, influenza
    - meningococcal, Japanese B encephalitis, tuberculosis, rabies, plague
To Immunize or Not?

Meningococcal Disease & Pilgrimage to Mecca

To Immunize or Not?
To Immunize or Not?

Remember the PPD

• “The risk of *M. tuberculosis* in long-term travelers to high-endemicity countries, even if not engaged in health-care work, is substantial and of similar magnitude to the average risk for the local population.”

Avian Influenza A (H5N1)

- Animal outbreaks in Asia, Europe, Near East and Africa
- Spread
  - Fowl -> Fowl
  - Fowl -> Humans (close, direct contact)
  - Humans -> Humans (rare)
- Prevention
  - Influenza vaccine ineffective
  - Tamiflu not routinely recommended
  - Avoid undercooked poultry and eggs

Special Categories of Travelers

- Children
- Pregnant women
- Diabetes mellitus
- Lung disease
- Cardiac disease
- HIV disease
Components of Travel Medicine

- Pre-Travel Care
- The Trip
- Post-Travel Care

http://www.cdc.gov/travel
Post-Travel Care

• Assess any illness during travel
• Update the problem list
• Determine need for further meds or lab
  • PPD, stool studies, CBC, LFTs, UA

Post-Travel Care

• Symptoms may begin days, weeks, or months after travel
• Don’t miss malaria!!!
• Concerning symptoms
  • fever
  • diarrhea
  • rash
  • passage of a “worm”
## Fever in the Returned Traveler

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• ? tropical infection vs. common illness</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Malaria is potentially fatal and may progress rapidly</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• r/o ASAP in all febrile patients who have traveled recently in the tropics</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• don’t miss malaria - may occur up to 1 year after travel</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Fever in the Returned Traveler

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Useful diagnostic tests</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• thick &amp; thin blood smear for malaria</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• CBC, LFTs, UA</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• cultures of blood, urine and stool</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• arbovirus serology</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Travel Medicine
Preparing Your Patient for Worldwide Travel

Jeanette Davis, RN
Patient Care Coordinator
OSU Thomas E. Rardin Family Practice
The Ohio State University Wexner Medical Center

Frequently Asked Questions
### FAQs - Immunizations

- Is there a shot for malaria?
- Is there a shot for Dengue Fever?
- Is there a shot for Bird Flu?
- What about the cholera vaccine?
- Can I get a gamma globulin shot?

### FAQs - Immunizations

- Are there any restrictions?
  - Can I drink alcohol?
  - Can I work out or play sports?
- Oral Typhoid
  - Keep in refrigerator
  - Avoid alcohol and antibiotics within 2 hours
FAQs - Immunizations

• Live vaccines
  • e.g. Yellow Fever, oral Typhoid
  • Must be given together, or separated by a month
  • 10-14 days to be effective

FAQs - Insect Repellents
(Mosquitos, Ticks, Fleas, Arthropods)

• DEET
  • Considered by many to be most effective repellent available
  • Avoid concentrations > 50% on skin, especially in children

• Picaridin (KBR3023)
  • Effective alternative to DEET
  • Does not irritate the skin
  • Sunscreen first, then repellent
### FAQs - Insect Repellents
(Mosquitos, Ticks, Fleas, Arthropods)

- **Dengue Fever**
  - Increasing in many countries
  - Dengue virus – *Aedes* mosquito – daytime feeder
  - No vaccine currently available
- **African mosquitoes**
  - Large
  - Persistent
  - Disease virulent

### FAQs – Malaria

- Resistance to medications
- Chloroquine
  - Preferred if in sensitive area
  - Weekly
  - Few side effects
  - Inexpensive
  - Avoid overdose
FAQs – Malaria

- Doxycycline
  - Daily
  - Take 2-5 days before, during, and 4 weeks after the trip
  - Side effects – sun sensitivity, vaginal yeast infection, GI
  - Inexpensive - $50

FAQs – Malaria

- Malarone
  - Daily
  - Take 2 days before, during, and 1 week after the trip
  - Well tolerated
  - Cost - $150-$200 for 10 day trip
  - Generic
### FAQs – Malaria

- Mefloquine (Lariam®)
  - Mental health issues
- Primaquine
  - Avoid if G6PD deficiency
  - Obtain medication in US

### FAQs – Traveler’s Diarrhea

- Antibiotic choices
- Food choices
  - Everything well cooked
  - No street vendors
  - Easy-to-pack supplemental food
- Attach toothbrush to bottled water
- Constipation
### Other Tips

- Hand sanitizers
- Mask
- Carry prescribed medications in original containers – not in checked luggage

### Other Tips

- Know which city or country close by has reliable or expert health care
- Know how to reach the US embassy
  - Consider registering
- Be aware of social customs
- Be aware of uprisings, crime
Summary
-1-

- Travel medicine is more than just “shots”
- Prevention and Preparedness are important aspects of travel medicine
- Components of travel medicine
  - pre-travel care
  - post-travel care

Summary
-2-

- Initial visit - who, what, when, where, how
- Cardiac and accidents are major causes of death in travelers
- General advice to travelers is important
  - personal supplies
  - proper clothing
  - sun protection
  - insect repellents
  - food & water hygiene
  - STD’s
  - air travel
  - immunizations
Summary

- Post-travel care
  - don’t miss malaria!
- It’s essential to remain current if you are going to provide care to your traveling patients