

Travel & COVID-19: What to consider and how to prepare



Before you go

▶ PERSONAL HEALTH

It is always wise to visit your healthcare practitioner before any travel – book an appointment 4-6 weeks before your departure. Make sure your routine immunizations are up-to-date (including a recent flu shot) and get any recommended or required travel vaccinations.

If you have a pre-existing condition (including cardiovascular disease, diabetes mellitus, obesity, hypertension, renal failure or respiratory condition) or are over 65 years of age, consider postponing travel until a vaccine or effective treatment is available. **Do not travel if you are sick.**

▶ DESTINATION

Take the time to learn about relevant health risks at your destination. Research and discuss with your practitioner the risk of COVID-19 at your destination.

▶ ENTRY REQUIREMENTS & RESTRICTIONS

Check the [IATA COVID-19 Travel Regulations Map](#) and refer to your destination's embassy for COVID-19 entry requirements (proof of negative test, health waiver, insurance coverage, self-isolation) or restrictions (closed borders or travel ban if coming from COVID-affected countries). If you are required to self-isolate upon arrival, make plans to ensure you can safely do so. Register with your embassy for updates.

▶ MEDICAL CARE

Know the contact information of a doctor at your destination that speaks your language. Check where COVID-19 testing is available in case you develop symptoms, are exposed to a confirmed case, or require proof of a negative test upon departure.

▶ TRANSPORTATION

Make sure your transportation company (airline, cruise ship, train) is committed to enforcing health measures that reduce COVID-19 transmission such as mandatory mask policies, distancing between passengers (blocking middle seats), contactless options where possible, and has enhanced cleaning procedures in place. Know what options are available to you in the event that you have to cancel or change your travel plans.

▶ TRAVEL HEALTH INSURANCE

Ensure you have a comprehensive travel health insurance policy that provides adequate coverage for your trip and your health needs. Where possible, opt for a policy that includes coverage for COVID-19 abroad. Read the fine print carefully and call your insurer to ask specific questions if the policy is unclear. See IAMAT's [glossary of common insurance terms](#) for guidance and prompts on what to ask before you buy.

▶ RISK TOLERANCE

Make sure you are comfortable with your travel plans and the health measures taken throughout your trip. Be advised that your itinerary may be subject to change and you may have to stay at your destination for a prolonged period of time. If you take prescription medication, pack an extra supply. Do your best to prepare ahead of time so that you can focus on enjoying your trip.

During your trip

▶ AIRPORT & TRANSIT HUBS

Arrive at the airport/transit hub early to allow for extra time navigating check-in and any required health screenings and security clearance procedures. Make sure to follow protocols set out by your transit hub and have a mask ready to wear while indoors and during transit. Avoid touching your face and wash your hands frequently with soap and water or alcohol-based hand sanitizer.

▶ ACCOMMODATIONS

Check with your accommodation beforehand to see what health measures and enhanced cleaning protocols are being enforced. Clean high-traffic surfaces (doorknobs, light switches, countertops) upon arrival. Minimize housekeeping visits and use contactless options as much as possible.

▶ ATTRACTIONS

Be advised that certain attractions and businesses may be closed or operating at a limited capacity. Be prepared to wait in queues. Carry extra masks and hand sanitizer to use throughout the day.

▶ ITINERARY

Avoid large crowds and where possible, opt for outdoor activities over indoor activities. Keep notes or a journal to document your activity throughout the day. This can assist with contact-tracing if you become sick or were potentially exposed to someone with COVID-19.

Once you return

▶ QUARANTINE & ISOLATION

Follow the advice of your local public health authority regarding what to do after travel.

▶ MONITOR YOUR HEALTH

All persons who have travelled recently (domestically or internationally) should monitor themselves for symptoms. Call a COVID-19 testing centre to arrange for testing if symptoms develop.

Helpful resources

▶ **COVID-19 GLOBAL OCCURRENCE:**

[World Health Organization](#)

[Johns Hopkins CSSE COVID-19 map](#)

[European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control](#)

▶ **ASSESSING HEALTHCARE CAPACITY ABROAD:**

[Global Health Security Index](#) (assessments of healthcare capacity and security)

[Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development](#) (country-specific impact of COVID-19 and relevant national tourism policies)

▶ **TRAVEL RESTRICTIONS AND ENTRY REQUIREMENTS:**

[IATA COVID-19 Travel Regulations Map](#)

▶ **EMBASSY:**

[Registration for US citizens and nationals abroad](#)

[Registration for Canadian citizens and nationals abroad](#)

▶ **TRAVEL HEALTH INSURANCE INFORMATION:**

[Guide to Travel Health Insurance](#)

[Understanding Travel Health Insurance: Terms you need to know](#)

▶ **TRAVELLING WITH MEDICATIONS:**

[Travelling with medications: A guide](#)