

Gabon

Medical Summary

The health risk information presented here is summarized from Shoreland Travax[®], a decision-support tool used by health care providers to perform a detailed health risk analysis based on specific locations, individual travel styles, and traveler risk behaviors. Travax provides practitioners current, independently researched malaria risk and prevention recommendations in a map-based format that goes beyond the annual WHO and CDC statements included here. Not included here are current reports from Travax of disease outbreaks or environmental events that may pose elevated risks to travelers' health and safety. The Providers section of this site offers a directory of health care providers who utilize Shoreland Travax for travel health counseling. Learn more about the detailed reports and maps available from these practitioners (includes links to samples).

General Information

Gabon is a developing nation but is in the upper half of the world's economies. Located in western Africa along the Atlantic Ocean (south of Cameroon), the climate is classified as humid equatorial (long dry season) in the south and humid equatorial (short dry season) in the north.

Immunizations

Yellow Fever

- Requirement: A vaccination certificate (recognition of lifetime validity is uncertain) is required for all travelers aged ≥ 1 year.
- Official Status: listed by WHO as a country where YF transmission risk is present.

Other Vaccines

Depending on your itinerary, your personal risk factors, and the length of your visit, your health care provider may offer you vaccination against hepatitis A, hepatitis B, influenza, measles, mumps, rubella, rabies, or typhoid fever. Routine immunizations, such as those that prevent tetanus/diphtheria or "childhood" diseases, should be reviewed and updated as needed.

Malaria

The following is current information as reported by the World Health Organization (WHO) and the U.S. Centers for Disease Control (CDC):

WHO—International Travel and Health (current online update, Country List)

(2018) Malaria risk due predominantly to *P. falciparum* exists throughout the year in the entire country.

- Recommended prevention: **C** – Risk of *P. falciparum* malaria, in combination with reported chloroquine and sulfadoxine–pyrimethamine resistance. Mosquito bite prevention plus atovaquone–proguanil or doxycycline or mefloquine chemoprophylaxis (select according to reported side effects and contraindications) ^a
- ^aAlternatively, for travel to rural areas with low risk of malaria infection, mosquito bite prevention can be combined with stand-by emergency treatment (SBET).

WHO Country List footnote: When available, the date of the most recent update or confirmation is indicated in parentheses in the country list. If no date is indicated, the most recent update or confirmation was provided before 2013.

CDC—Health Information for International Travel (current online edition)

Areas with malaria: All.

- Estimated relative risk of malaria for US travelers: High.
- Drug resistance⁴: Chloroquine
- Malaria species: *P. falciparum* 90%, *P. malariae*, *P. ovale*, and *P. vivax* 10% combined.
- Recommended chemoprophylaxis: Atovaquone-proguanil, doxycycline, or mefloquine.

⁴ Refers to *P. falciparum* malaria unless otherwise noted.

Other Concerns

Travelers' Diarrhea

High risk exists throughout the country, including in deluxe accommodations. Food and beverage precautions may reduce the likelihood of illness.

Travelers should carry loperamide for self-treatment of diarrhea and, if risk is moderate to high, an antibiotic to add if diarrhea is severe. Consult a knowledgeable health care provider regarding which antibiotic is appropriate for you and most effective for your destination.

Insect- and Arthropod-Borne Diseases

African trypanosomiasis, chikungunya, dengue, loiasis, onchocerciasis, tick-bite fever, West Nile virus, Zika may pose a risk. Personal protective measures are important.

Other Disease and Health Risks

Additional concerns include Ebola virus disease, helminths, marine hazards, monkeypox, schistosomiasis, sexually transmitted infections, snakebites, tuberculosis.

Consular Advice

The material below includes information from the U.S. Department of State (DOS), U.K. Foreign & Commonwealth Office (FCO), Global Affairs Canada (GAC), and Australia's Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), as well as from additional open-source material. Standard safety precautions that apply to all international travel can be found in the Library article Safety and Security.

Terrorism Risk

No intrinsic risk of attack by terrorist groups exists, but unforeseen attacks are possible.

Crime

Low risk of violent crime (armed robbery, home robbery, sexual assault, and carjacking) exists throughout the country, mainly in Libreville, Port Gentil, and on remote beaches.

Moderate risk of petty crime exists throughout the country, especially in crowded places (including markets, public transportation, and areas frequented by tourists). Theft of valuables from unattended vehicles is common.

Civil Unrest

Protests and demonstrations occur throughout the country, especially in the cities of Libreville and Port-Gentil, and have the potential to turn violent without warning. Bystanders are at risk of harm from violence or from the response by authorities.

Unsafe Areas

Piracy (involving commercial vessels) occurs in coastal and international waters.

Transportation Safety

High risk of traffic-related injury or death exists. The road-traffic death rate is 12 to 24 per 100,000 population. The rate is less than 10 in most high-income countries. Speed laws are poorly enforced. Driving at night is not advised. Seek local advice before traveling on roads outside urban areas after dark.

Traffic flows on the right-hand side of the road. Travelers (including drivers and pedestrians) accustomed to traffic moving on the opposite side should be vigilant when navigating traffic.

Many taxis are unsafe. Use taxis from official ranks or dispatched via smart phone app or radio from a reputable company and ascertain the license or identification number of the dispatched vehicle.

Natural Disasters

The rainy season is from October through December and from February through May. Floods, mudslides, and landslides may occur.

Consular Information

Selected Embassies or Consulates in Gabon

- | United States: [+241] 01-45-71-00; ga.usembassy.gov
- | Canada: [+241] 01-44-29-65; travel.gc.ca/assistance/embassies-consulates/gabon
- | United Kingdom: U.K. does not have an embassy or consulate in Gabon.
- | Australia: Australia does not have an embassy or consulate in Gabon.

Gabon's Embassies or Consulates in Selected Countries

- | In the U.S.: www.gambiaembassydc.us
- | In Canada: www.ambasadegabon.ca
- | In the U.K.: www.gabonembassyuk.co.uk
- | In Australia: [+61] 2-9907-8707

Visa/HIV Testing

HIV testing is not required to obtain a tourist, work, or residence visa.

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