

Belgium

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 US 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

Belgium is an advanced economy classified as high income. It is a federal state composed of 3 highly autonomous regions: the Walloon Region, the Brussels-Capital Region, and the Flanders Region. Located in northwestern Europe (north of France and south of the Netherlands), the climate is classified as humid temperate (no dry season).

Vaccinations

Depending on your itinerary, your personal risk factors, and the length of your visit, your health care provider may offer you vaccination against COVID-19, hepatitis A, hepatitis B, influenza, measles, mumps, rubella, or rabies. 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 US Centers for Disease Control (CDC):

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

No statement given.

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

Areas with malaria: None.

Drug resistance: Not applicable.

Other Concerns

Travelers' Diarrhea

Minimal risk (comparable to that in other industrialized countries) exists throughout the country. Community sanitation and food safety measures are generally good, and health concerns related to food and beverage consumption are minimal. Risk for viral gastroenteritis (e.g., norovirus) may be elevated based on season, traveler itinerary, and/or level of community transmission.

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.

Other Food-Borne Illnesses

Precautions to prevent brucellosis may be needed.

Insect- and Arthropod-Borne Diseases

Lyme disease may pose a risk. Personal protective measures are important.

Other Disease and Health Risks

Additional concerns include air pollution, hantavirus, leptospirosis, marine hazards, sexually transmitted infections.

Consular Advice

The material below includes information from the US Department of State (DOS), the UK Foreign, Commonwealth & Development 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

Risk of attack by transnational terrorist groups exists throughout Europe. Targets may include domestic and international organizations and businesses; public places and events, including those frequented by tourists; and transportation systems.

From 2016 through 2017, attacks targeted areas frequented by tourists.

Crime

Low risk of violent crime (armed robbery) and moderate risk of petty crime exists in cities, especially in Brussels (particularly in Gare du Midi, Gare du Nord, and Schuman [the E.U. quarter] train stations) and on international trains.

Scams involving corrupt officials have been reported.

Risk exists of robberies and/or assaults occurring after consuming intentionally drugged food or drink; tourists are frequently targeted.

Civil Unrest

Protests and demonstrations frequently occur throughout the country and are generally peaceful but have the potential to turn violent without warning. Bystanders are at risk of harm from violence or from the response by authorities. Disruption to transportation, free movement, or the ability to carry out daily activities may occur.

Water Safety

Rent water sports equipment from reputable operators. Scuba dive only with personnel certified by PADI or NAUI and use equipment only from PADI- or NAUI-certified dive operators.

Transportation Safety

Low risk of traffic-related injury or death exists. The road traffic death rate is less than 7 per 100,000 population, the lowest risk category.

Airline Safety

The US Federal Aviation Administration has determined that the civil aviation authority of this country oversees its air carriers in accordance with minimum international safety standards.

Consular Information

Selected Embassies or Consulates in Belgium

- United States: [+32] 2-811-4000; be.usembassy.gov
- Canada: [+32] 2-741-0611; www.belgium.gc.ca
- United Kingdom: [+32] 2-287-6211; www.gov.uk/world/organisations/british-embassy-brussels
- Australia: [+32] 2-286-05-00; eu.mission.gov.au

Belgium's Embassies or Consulates in Selected Countries

- In the U.S.: diplomatie.belgium.be/en/united_states
- In Canada: diplomatie.belgium.be/en/canada
- In the U.K.: unitedkingdom.diplomatie.belgium.be
- In Australia: diplomatie.belgium.be/en/australia

Visa/HIV Testing

HIV and hepatitis testing may be required to obtain a work or residence visa.

