

Belize

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

Belize is a developing nation classified as upper middle income. Located in Central America (south of Mexico and north of Guatemala), the climate classifications range from humid equatorial (no dry season) in the south to humid equatorial (long dry season) in the north.

Vaccinations

Yellow Fever

Although yellow fever does not occur in Belize, an official yellow fever vaccination certificate may be required depending on your itinerary.

- *Requirement:* A vaccination certificate is required for travelers aged ≥ 1 year coming from countries with risk of YF transmission. This also applies to all airport transit stops (no exit through immigration checkpoint) in risk countries.

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 US Centers for Disease Control (CDC):

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

(2020) Malaria risk due predominantly to *P. vivax* exists in some areas of Stan Creek and is negligible elsewhere.

- Recommended prevention in risk areas: **A** - Very limited risk of malaria transmission. Mosquito bite prevention only.

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: Rare locally transmitted cases. None in Belize City and islands frequented by tourists such as Ambergris Caye.

- Drug resistance³ : None.
- Malaria species: *P. vivax* 100%.
- Recommended chemoprophylaxis: None (practice mosquito avoidance).

³ Refers to *P. falciparum* malaria unless otherwise noted.

⁴ Primaquine and tafenoquine can cause hemolytic anemia in people with G6PD deficiency. Patients must be screened for G6PD deficiency before starting primaquine or tafenoquine. See *Tafenoquine Approved for Malaria Prophylaxis and Treatment* for more information.

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.

Other Food-Borne Illnesses

Precautions to prevent seafood poisoning may be needed.

Insect- and Arthropod-Borne Diseases

Chagas' disease (American trypanosomiasis), chikungunya, dengue, leishmaniasis, Zika may pose a risk. Personal protective measures are important.

Other Disease and Health Risks

Additional concerns include helminths, leptospirosis, marine hazards, sexually transmitted infections, snakebites, tuberculosis.

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

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

Crime

High risk of violent crime (armed robbery, home invasion, assault, sexual assault, carjacking, gang-related violence, and murder) and high risk of petty crime exist throughout the country, especially in Belize City (particularly in southern areas), San Pedro (Belize District), Caye Caulker, and in areas surrounding Belmopan and Mayan archeological sites.

Scams involving extortion have been reported.

Civil Unrest

Protests and demonstrations 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

Basic safety standards for recreational water activities (including scuba diving, snorkeling, and jet-skiing) are often not in place. 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

Significant risk of traffic-related injury or death exists. The road traffic death rate is more than 24 per 100,000 population, the highest risk category. Carefully assess the safety of transportation options before any road travel.

Speed laws are poorly enforced.

Seat belt laws are poorly enforced.

Drunk driving laws are poorly enforced.

There are no restrictions on mobile phone usage while driving.

Structural standards for vehicles may not meet international standards.

Natural Disasters

The hurricane season is from June through November. Floods, mudslides, and landslides may occur.

Consular Information

Selected Embassies or Consulates in Belize

- United States: [+501] 822-4011; bz.usembassy.gov
- Canada: [+501] 223-1060; travel.gc.ca/assistance/embassies-consulates/belize
- United Kingdom: [+501] 822-2146; www.gov.uk/world/organisations/british-high-commission-belmopan
- Australia: Australia does not have an embassy or consulate in Belize.

Belize's Embassies or Consulates in Selected Countries

- In the U.S.: www.belizeembassyusa.mfa.gov.bz
- In Canada: www.belizeconsulatealberta.com
- In the U.K.: belizehighcommission.co.uk
- In Australia: [+61] 02-9488-7428

Visa/HIV Testing

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

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