

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 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.

Immunizations

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 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, typhoid fever, or a one time polio booster if you haven't previously received one for travel. 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. 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.

- Estimated relative risk of malaria for US travelers: Very low.
- Drug resistance⁴: None.
- Malaria species: *P. vivax* 100%
- Recommended chemoprophylaxis: Mosquito avoidance only.

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.

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 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

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, especially in Belmopan and Belize City, 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

Territorial disputes may occur in areas bordering Guatemala.

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 greater than 24 per 100,000 population, the highest risk category. Carefully assess the safety of transportation options before any road travel. 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.

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.embassyofbelize.org
- | 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.

© 2019 Shoreland, Inc. All rights reserved.