

Benin

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

Benin is a developing nation classified as low income. Located in western Africa (west of Burkina Faso and east of Nigeria), the climate is classified as dry (semi arid) in the north and humid equatorial (long dry season) in the south.

Immunizations

Yellow Fever

An official yellow fever vaccination certificate may be required depending on your itinerary. Vaccination is usually recommended if you'll be traveling in areas where there is risk of yellow fever transmission.

- | **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.
- | **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, meningococcal meningitis, 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* 85%, *P. ovale* 5%-10%, *P. vivax* rare.

1 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, Zika may pose a risk. Personal protective measures are important.

Other Disease and Health Risks

Additional concerns include helminths, lassa fever, marine hazards, 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.

Consular Travel Advice

Due to terrorism, kidnapping, and ongoing security concerns, U.K. (FCO) advises avoiding travel to W National Park and the bordering hunting zones of Meekrou and Djona; the area between the W National Park and the border with Niger; Pendjari National Park and bordering hunting zones; and all other areas within 5 km (3.1 mi) of the border with Burkina Faso. U.K. (FCO) advises reconsidering travel (or avoiding nonessential travel) to the area between Interstate Highway (RNIE) 2 (Tchaourou to Malanville) and the border with Nigeria. U.S. (DOS), Canada (GAC), and Australia (DFAT) have more limited warnings.

Terrorism Risk

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

Crime

High risk of violent crime (armed robbery and carjacking) and high risk of petty crime exist in Cotonou, especially on beaches near hotels frequented by foreigners, in the Haie Vive and Les Cocotiers neighborhoods, and in Dantokpa market; in areas bordering Nigeria; on highways and rural roads.

Scams involving credit cards and a wide range of financial activities have been reported.

Kidnappings by criminal groups occur in W National Park, Pendjari National Park, and bordering hunting zones and in areas bordering Burkina Faso. Targets may include foreigners (especially Westerners).

Civil Unrest

Protests and demonstrations occur throughout the country and 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 may occur.

Water Safety

Hazardous water conditions (including currents, tides, and undertows) may occur. Heed posted warnings and avoid beaches that are not patrolled. Do not swim alone or after dark and do not walk on any beach after dark.

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. No speed laws exist. 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.

Road-traffic collisions can lead to violent confrontations.

Public buses and mototaxis do not meet international safety standards (due to unsafe vehicles, poor maintenance, and hazardous driving).

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 April through July in southern areas and from June through September in northern areas. Floods, mudslides, and landslides may occur.

Sandstorms and dust storms occur from December through March, especially in northern areas.

Consular Information

Selected Embassies or Consulates in Benin

- | United States: [+229] 21-30-06-50; bj.usembassy.gov
- | Canada: Canada does not have an embassy or consulate in Benin.
- | United Kingdom: U.K. does not have an embassy or consulate in Benin.
- | Australia: Australia does not have an embassy or consulate in Benin.

Benin's Embassies or Consulates in Selected Countries

- | In the U.S.: www.beninembassy.us
- | In Canada: [+1] 613-233-4429, 4868, 5273
- | In the U.K.: beninconsulate.co.uk/index.html
- | In Australia: Benin does not have an embassy or consulate in Australia.

Visa/HIV Testing

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

© 2019 Shoreland, Inc. All rights reserved.