

Eritrea

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

Eritrea is a developing nation classified as low income. Located in eastern Africa along the Red Sea (north of Ethiopia), the climate classifications range from dry (arid) to dry (semi arid), with cooler temperatures in some high-altitude areas.

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 ≥ 9 months coming from countries with risk of YF transmission. This also applies to airport transit stops (no exit through immigration checkpoint) longer than 12 hours 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, 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)

(2019) Malaria risk due to *P. falciparum* (65%) and *P. vivax* (35%) exists throughout the year in the entire country below 2200 m. There is no risk in Asmara.

- ▮ Recommended prevention in risk areas: **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 areas < 2,200 m (7,218 ft). None in Asmara.

- ▮ Estimated relative risk of malaria for US travelers: High.
- ▮ Drug resistance⁴: Chloroquine.

- | Malaria species: *P. falciparum* 85%, *P. vivax* 10%-15%, *P. ovale* rare
- | 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

Dengue, leishmaniasis may pose a risk. Personal protective measures are important.

Other Disease and Health Risks

Additional concerns include 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 military conflict and ongoing security concerns, Australia (DFAT) advises avoiding travel to regions bordering Ethiopia, Djibouti, and Sudan and to the towns of Assab, Barentu, and Teseney; and advises reconsidering travel (or avoiding nonessential travel) to the rest of the country, except Asmara. U.S. (DOS), UK (FCO), and Canada (GAC) have more limited warnings.

Terrorism Risk

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

Crime

Moderate risk of violent crime (armed robbery, home invasion, and carjacking) exists in Asmara, in border areas, and along the coast north of Massawa.

Low risk of petty crime exists throughout the country in cities and towns.

Theft of valuables from unattended vehicles is common.

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, free movement, or the ability to carry out daily activities may occur.

Unsafe Areas

Armed conflict occurs in areas bordering Djibouti and Ethiopia.

Landmines and other unexploded ordnance are present throughout the country, especially in rural areas and areas bordering Ethiopia.

Restricted areas may exist on the Hanish Islands.

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

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. 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.

Road-traffic collisions can lead to violent confrontations.

Taxis 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 June through September. Floods, mudslides, and landslides may occur.

Seismic and volcanic activity occurs.

Consular Information

Selected Embassies or Consulates in Eritrea

- | United States: [+291] 1-12-00-04; er.usembassy.gov
- | Canada: [+291] 1-18-18-55; travel.gc.ca/assistance/embassies-consulates/eritrea
- | United Kingdom: [+44] 1908-516666; www.gov.uk/world/organisations/british-embassy-asmara
- | Australia: Australia does not have an embassy or consulate in Eritrea.

Eritrea's Embassies or Consulates in Selected Countries

- | In the U.S.: www.embassyeritrea.org
- | In Canada: consulateoferitrea.com
- | In the U.K.: eritrea.visahq.co.uk/embassy/united-kingdom
- | In Australia: ericon.org.au

Visa/HIV Testing

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

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