

Gambia

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

Gambia is a developing nation classified as low income. Located in western Africa along the Atlantic Ocean (nearly surrounded by Senegal), the climate is classified as predominantly humid equatorial (long dry season).

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. Note: This does not apply to airport transit stops (no exit through immigration checkpoint) 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.

- | Drug resistance³: Chloroquine.
- | Malaria species: *P. falciparum* $\geq 85\%$, *P. ovale* 5%–10%, *P. malariae* and *P. vivax* rare.

1 Recommended chemoprophylaxis: Atovaquone-proguanil, doxycycline, mefloquine, or tafenoquine.⁴

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

African trypanosomiasis, dengue, hepatitis C, leishmaniasis, tick-bite fever, Zika may pose a risk. Personal protective measures are important.

Other Disease and Health Risks

Additional concerns include helminths, marine hazards, melioidosis, 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.

Terrorism Risk

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

Crime

Negligible risk of violent crime exists throughout the country.

Moderate risk of petty crime exists throughout the country, especially on ferries and beaches and in markets and other shopping districts frequented by tourists. Theft of valuables from unattended vehicles and accommodations is common.

Scams involving a wide range of financial activities and false identity (such as criminals posing as tour guides, locally known as "bumsters") have been reported.

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.

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.

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 October. Floods, mudslides, and landslides may occur.

Consular Information

Selected Embassies or Consulates in Gambia

- | United States: [+220] 439-2856; gm.usembassy.gov
- | Canada: [+220] 449-5133; travel.gc.ca/assistance/embassies-consulates/gambia-the
- | United Kingdom: [+220] 449-5134; www.gov.uk/world/organisations/british-high-commission-banjul
- | Australia: Australia does not have an embassy or consulate in Gambia.

Gambia's Embassies or Consulates in Selected Countries

- | In the U.S.: www.gambiaembassy.us
- | In Canada: [+1] 416-440-0777
- | In the U.K.: [+44] 020-7229-8066
- | In Australia: Gambia does not have an embassy or consulate in Australia.

Visa/HIV Testing

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

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