

Mexico

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

Mexico is a developing nation classified as upper middle income. Located in North America (south of the U.S. and north of Guatemala), the climate is extremely diverse with classifications that range from humid equatorial (no dry season) to arid (dry), with cooler temperatures in some high-altitude areas.

Immunizations

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 U.S. Centers for Disease Control (CDC):

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

(2018) Malaria risk due almost exclusively to *P. vivax* exists intermittently throughout the year in some rural areas that are not often visited by tourists. Low risk exists in some localities in Chiapas State (Costa). Localities with very low risk are situated in the states of Chihuahua, Durango, Nayarit, Quintana Roo and Sinaloa.

- Recommended prevention in moderate 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: Present in Chiapas and southern part of Chihuahua. Rare cases in Campeche, Durango, Jalisco, Nayarit, Quintana Roo, San Luis Potosi, Sinaloa, Sonora, and Tabasco. No malaria along the US–Mexico border (see Map 2-18).

- Drug resistance³: None.
- Malaria species: *P. vivax* 100%.
- Recommended chemoprophylaxis: States of Chiapas and southern part of Chihuahua: Atovaquone-proguanil, chloroquine, doxycycline, mefloquine, primaquine,⁴ or tafenoquine.⁴ States of Campeche, Durango, Jalisco, Nayarit, Quintana Roo, San Luis Potosi, Sinaloa, Sonora, and Tabasco: 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 brucellosis, seafood poisoning may be needed.

Insect- and Arthropod-Borne Diseases

Chagas' disease (American trypanosomiasis), chikungunya, dengue, leishmaniasis, Rocky Mountain spotted fever, West Nile virus, Zika may pose a risk. Personal protective measures are important.

Other Disease and Health Risks

Additional concerns include air pollution, helminths, marine hazards, melioidosis, sexually transmitted infections, snakebites.

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 ongoing violence and organized crime, U.S. (DOS) advises avoiding travel to Colima, Guerrero (including Acapulco), Michoacán, Sinaloa (except areas frequented by travelers in Mazatlán), and Tamaulipas states and advises reconsidering travel (or avoiding nonessential travel) to Chihuahua, Coahuila, Durango, Jalisco (except Guadalajara and Puerto Vallarta), México, Morelos, Nayarit, Nuevo León, San Luis Potosí, Sonora, and Zacatecas states. Canada (GAC) and Australia (DFAT) have more limited warnings. U.K. (FCO) has no current warning.

Terrorism Risk

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

Crime

High risk of violent crime (armed robbery, sexual assault, carjacking, gang-related violence, and murder) exists throughout most of the country, especially in large cities; along the Pacific Highway; on intercity buses.

Moderate risk of violent crime also exists in areas frequented by tourists, including Acapulco, Cancún, Cabo San Lucas, Cozumel, and Playa del Carmen.

High risk of petty crime exists throughout the country, especially in Mexico City (particularly on the metro) and other cities; in airports; in areas frequented by tourists, including resort areas.

Kidnappings by criminal groups occur throughout the country, especially in northern states. Targets may include foreigners (especially Westerners).

Express kidnappings to force cash withdrawals at ATMs occur in Mexico City and other cities.

Scams involving false identity (such as criminals posing as police officers), pirated merchandise, and unethical actions by health care providers have been reported.

Risk exists of robberies and/or assaults occurring after consuming intentionally drugged food or drink; tourists are frequently targeted. Highest threat areas include resorts.

Civil Unrest

Protests and demonstrations frequently occur throughout the country, especially in Mexico City and Chiapas, Guerrero, Michoacán, and Oaxaca states, 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 may occur and a dangerous security environment may exist in the northern states of Sonora, Chihuahua, Coahuila, Nuevo León, Tamaulipas, Sinaloa, Durango, and the southwestern states of Guerrero, Jalisco, Michoacán, and Nayarit.

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

High risk of traffic-related injury or death exists. The road-traffic death rate is 12 to 24 per 100,000 population. The rate is less than 10 in most high-income countries. Speed laws are poorly enforced. Seek local advice before traveling on roads outside urban areas after dark. Driving at night is not advised.

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.

Airline Safety

U.S. Federal Aviation Administration has determined that the civil aviation authority of this country oversees its air carriers in accordance with minimum international safety standards.

Natural Disasters

The hurricane season is from June through November in coastal areas along the Gulf of Mexico and the Pacific Ocean. Floods, mudslides, and landslides may occur.

Seismic and volcanic activity frequently occur.

Consular Information

Selected Embassies or Consulates in Mexico

- | United States: [+52] 55-5080-2000; mx.usembassy.gov
- | Canada: [+52] 55-5724-7900; www.mexico.gc.ca
- | United Kingdom: [+52] 55-1670-3200; www.gov.uk/world/organisations/british-embassy-mexico-city
- | Australia: [+52] 55-1101-2200; www.mexico.embassy.gov.au

Mexico's Embassies or Consulates in Selected Countries

- | In the U.S.: embamex.sre.gob.mx/eua
- | In Canada: embamex.sre.gob.mx/canada
- | In the U.K.: embamex.sre.gob.mx/reinounido
- | In Australia: embamex.sre.gob.mx/australia

Visa/HIV Testing

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

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