

Sri Lanka

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

Sri Lanka is a developing nation classified as lower middle income. Located in south-central Asia in the Indian Ocean (south of India), the climate is classified as humid equatorial (no dry season) in the south and humid equatorial (long dry season) in the north.

Immunizations

Yellow Fever

Although yellow fever does not occur in Sri Lanka, an official yellow fever vaccination certificate may be required depending on your itinerary.

- ▮ *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, Japanese encephalitis, 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)

No statement given.

CDC—*Health Information for International Travel* (current online edition)

Areas with malaria: None.

Drug resistance: Not applicable.

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

Chikungunya, dengue, leishmaniasis, scrub typhus, West Nile virus may pose a risk. Personal protective measures are important.

Other Disease and Health Risks

Additional concerns include air pollution, leptospirosis, marine hazards, melioidosis, 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, U.S. (DOS) and Australia (DFAT) advise reconsidering travel (or avoiding nonessential travel) to this country. U.K. (FCO) and Canada (GAC) have no current warnings.

Terrorism Risk

Low risk of attack by domestic 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

Moderate risk of violent crime (armed robbery and sexual assault, including verbal and physical harassment) and moderate risk of petty crime exist throughout the country, especially in areas frequented by tourists.

Theft of valuables from unattended accommodations is common.

Scams involving exorbitant fees for products have been reported.

Risk exists of robberies and/or assaults occurring after consuming intentionally drugged food or drink; tourists are frequently targeted (including on southern beach resorts).

Civil Unrest

Protests and demonstrations occur in Colombo 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

Ethnic tensions may be present throughout the country, especially in eastern areas.

Landmines and other unexploded ordnance may be present in parts of Northern, Eastern, and Central provinces, especially in the cities of Ampara, Anuradhapura, Batticaloa, Jaffna, Kilinochchi, Mannar, Mullaitivu, Polonnoruwa, Trincomalee, and Vavuniya.

Military presence exists and restricted areas may be present in Northern Province, especially in the cities of Jaffna, Kilinochchi, Mannar, Mullaitivu, and Vavuniya.

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

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.

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. Driving at night is not advised. Seek local advice before traveling on roads outside urban areas after dark.

Traffic flows on the left-hand side of the road. Travelers (including drivers and pedestrians) accustomed to traffic moving on the opposite side should be vigilant when navigating traffic.

Public buses and rail services 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 cyclone season is from April through December.

The monsoon season is from December through March in northeastern areas and May through October in southwestern areas. Floods, mudslides, and landslides may occur.

Consular Information

Selected Embassies or Consulates in Sri Lanka

- | United States: [+94] 11-249-8500; lk.usembassy.gov
- | Canada: [+94] 11-522-6232; www.srilanka.gc.ca
- | United Kingdom: [+94] 11-5390639; www.gov.uk/world/organisations/british-high-commission-colombo
- | Australia: [+94] 11-246-3200; www.srilanka.embassy.gov.au

Sri Lanka's Embassies or Consulates in Selected Countries

- | In the U.S.: www.slembassy.org
- | In Canada: www.srilankahcottawa.org
- | In the U.K.: www.srilankahighcommission.co.uk
- | In Australia: www.slhcaust.org

Visa/HIV Testing

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

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