

Switzerland

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

Switzerland is an advanced economy classified as high income. Located in central Europe (between France, Germany, Austria, and Italy), the climate is classified as humid temperate (no dry season), 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 B, influenza, measles, mumps, rubella, meningococcal meningitis, rabies, or tick-borne encephalitis. 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

Minimal risk exists throughout the country. Community sanitation is generally good, and health concerns related to food and beverages are minimal.

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

Lyme disease may pose a risk. Personal protective measures are important.

Other Disease and Health Risks

Additional concerns include air pollution.

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

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

Crime

Low risk of violent crime (sexual assault) exists throughout the country.

Moderate risk of petty crime exists in cities (including Geneva, Zurich, Basel, and Bern), especially in tourist areas and on public transportation during peak tourism seasons (from May to September and at Christmas).

Scams involving the use of distraction techniques to commit robbery 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.

Water Safety

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

Low risk of traffic-related injury or death exists. The road-traffic death rate is less than 7 per 100,000 population, the lowest risk category.

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.

Exercise caution on rail services, especially in Bern, Geneva, and Zurich, due to the risk of pick-pocketing.

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

Winter storms and severe rain storms occur in alpine areas. Avalanches, floods, mudslides, and landslides may occur.

Consular Information

Selected Embassies or Consulates in Switzerland

- | United States: [+41] 31-357-7011; ch.usembassy.gov
- | Canada: [+41] 31-357-3200; www.switzerland.gc.ca
- | United Kingdom: [+41] 31-359-7700; www.gov.uk/world/organisations/british-embassy-berne
- | Australia: [+41] 22-799-9100; www.australia.ch

Switzerland's Embassies or Consulates in Selected Countries

- | In the U.S.: www.swissemb.org
- | In Canada: www.eda.admin.ch/canada
- | In the U.K.: www.eda.admin.ch/london
- | In Australia: www.eda.admin.ch/australia

Visa/HIV Testing

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

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