

Venezuela

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 US 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

Venezuela is a developing nation classified as upper middle income. Located in northern South America along the Atlantic Ocean (west of Guyana and east of Colombia), the climate is extremely diverse with classifications that range from dry (arid) to humid equatorial (no dry season), with cooler temperatures in some high-altitude areas.

Vaccinations

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 certificate proving yellow fever vaccination is required for travelers aged ≥ 1 year coming from Brazil. This also applies to airport transit stops (no exit through immigration checkpoint) longer than 12 hours in Brazil.
- **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 COVID-19, 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 US Centers for Disease Control (CDC):

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

(2018) Malaria risk due to *P. vivax* (74.6%) and *P. falciparum* (25.4%) is high throughout the year in some areas of Amazonas, Bolívar, Delta Amacuro and Sucre states. There is moderate risk in Zulia State. There is low risk in Anzoátegui and Monagas states. Risk of *P. falciparum* malaria is mostly restricted to municipalities in areas of Amazonas (Alto Orinoco, Atabapo, Atures, Autana and Manapiare), Bolívar (Angostura, Cedeño, El Callao, Gran Sabana, Heres, Piar, Rocio and Sifontes), Delta Amacuro, and Sucre (Benítez, Bermúdez, Cajigal and Arismendi) states.

- Recommended prevention in *P. vivax* risk areas: **B** – Risk of *P. vivax* malaria only. Mosquito bite prevention plus chloroquine chemoprophylaxis^a
- Recommended prevention in *P. falciparum* 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 < 1,700 m (5,577 ft). Present in Angel Falls (see Map 2-28).

- Drug resistance³: Chloroquine.
- Malaria species: *P. vivax* 83%, *P. falciparum* 17%.
- 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, with moderate risk in deluxe accommodations. Community sanitation and food safety measures are generally inadequate. Some itineraries (e.g., remote destinations, austere accommodations) and activities (e.g., ecotourism, eating street or local-market food) further increase risk.

Travelers should observe food and beverage precautions, which 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, mayaro virus, onchocerciasis, West Nile virus, Zika may pose a risk. Personal protective measures are important.

Other Disease and Health Risks

Additional concerns include air pollution, helminths, leptospirosis, marine hazards, schistosomiasis, sexually transmitted infections, snakebites, tuberculosis.

Consular Advice

The material below includes information from the US Department of State (DOS), the UK Foreign, Commonwealth & Development 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 the risk of arbitrary detention, civil unrest, and other ongoing security concerns, US (DOS), Canada (GAC), and Australia (DFAT) advise avoiding all travel to this country. UK (FCO) has a more limited warning.

Terrorism Risk

Low risk of attack by domestic terrorist groups exists in areas bordering Colombia. Targets may include domestic and international organizations and businesses.

High risk of kidnapping by terrorist groups exists in areas bordering Colombia. Targets may include foreigners (especially Westerners), journalists, nongovernmental organization workers, missionaries, and aid workers.

Crime

High risk of violent crime (armed robbery, home invasion, carjacking, gang-related violence, and murder) and high risk of petty crime exist throughout the country, especially in Caracas (particularly in El Ávila National Park and Sabana Grande neighborhood), Simón Bolívar International Airport (including routes to and from Caracas), Margarita Island, on or near public transportation, and in shanty towns.

Scams involving corrupt officials and false identity (such as criminals posing as police officers) have been reported.

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

Civil Unrest

Protests and demonstrations frequently occur throughout the country, especially in Caracas and other major cities, 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. Shortages of food, municipal water, electricity, and basic necessities are pervasive, including in Caracas and in hospitals throughout the country.

Unsafe Areas

A dangerous security environment exists in areas bordering Colombia. Piracy (involving commercial and private leisure vessels) occurs in coastal waters.

Water Safety

Basic safety standards for recreational water activities (including scuba diving, snorkeling, jet-skiing, rafting, kayaking, and tubing) may not be 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.

Outdoor Safety

Basic safety standards for adventure activities (including eco-tourism activities) may not be in place. Travelers should only use reputable adventure-sport operators for activities and equipment rentals.

Transportation Safety

Significant risk of traffic-related injury or death exists. The road traffic death rate is more than 24 per 100,000 population, the highest risk category. Carefully assess the safety of transportation options before any road travel.

There are no speed laws.

Drunk driving laws are poorly enforced.

Structural standards for vehicles may not meet international standards.

Airline Safety

The US Federal Aviation Administration has determined that the civil aviation authority of this country does not oversee its air carriers in accordance with minimum international safety standards.

Natural Disasters

The rainy season is from June through December, coinciding with the hurricane season. Floods, mudslides, and landslides may occur, especially in coastal areas.

Seismic activity occurs, especially along the coast.

Consular Information

Selected Embassies or Consulates in Venezuela

- United States: The Embassy has suspended operations; see ve.usembassy.gov
- Canada: The Embassy has suspended operations; see www.venezuela.gc.ca
- United Kingdom: www.gov.uk/world/organisations/british-embassy-venezuela
- Australia: Australia does not have an embassy or consulate in Venezuela.

Venezuela's Embassies or Consulates in Selected Countries

- In the U.S.: eeuu.embajada.gob.ve
- In Canada: www.misionvenezuela.org/V2
- In the U.K.: reinounido.embajada.gob.ve
- In Australia: australia.embajada.gob.ve

Visa/HIV Testing

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

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