

America and Africa. The selection of recommended travel vaccines should involve an assessment of your risk (i.e., destination, type and length of travel, current health status, climatic factors). Vaccine-preventable diseases can be categorized as those transmitted by insect bites (yellow fever, Japanese encephalitis, tick-borne encephalitis, plague), food and water (hepatitis A, typhoid, poliomyelitis, cholera), respiratory droplets (meningitis, measles, mumps, rubella, influenza, pneumococcus, diphtheria, tuberculosis) and physical contact (tetanus, hepatitis B, rabies, anthrax).

Assess your medical fitness to travel

Travellers with underlying chronic medical conditions (heart, lung, diabetes, cancer, immune disorders) should be

assessed by a physician before they explore new and exciting destinations. Travellers undertaking an adventurous or higher-risk trip may require a recent medical exam to ensure fitness to travel. Make sure you have an adequate supply of all prescribed medications and any necessary medical certification outlining chronic medical conditions. Travel kits with sterile needles are a good idea for the developing world. Remember, any illness that occurs at home can occur overseas. Healthy travels!

Dr. James J. Aw
 Director
 King's International
 Travel Centre
 King's Health Centre
 Toronto, Canada



wear a MedicAlert® bracelet. Through the MedicAlert® Foundation, your vital medical facts become part of a database that can be accessed 24 hours a day from anywhere in the world. Call 1-800-825-3785 for membership information or visit

the MedicAlert® Web site (<http://www.medicalert.ca>).

Health Canada strongly recommends an individual risk assessment by your own family doctor or a travel medicine provider prior to travelling. Based on your health