

## Cuba



Capital City : "Havana"

Official Language: "Spanish"

Monetary Unit: "Cuban peso (CUP) Cuban convertible peso (CUC)"

## General information

The information on these pages should be used to research health risks and to inform the pre-travel consultation. For advice regarding safety and security please check the UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) website.

Travellers should ideally arrange an appointment with their health professional at least four to six weeks before travel. However, even if time is short, an appointment is still worthwhile. This appointment provides an opportunity to assess health risks taking into account a number of factors including destination, medical history, and planned activities. For those with pre-existing health problems, an earlier appointment is recommended.

While most travellers have a healthy and safe trip, there are some risks that are relevant to travellers regardless of destination. These may for example include road traffic and other accidents, diseases transmitted by insects or ticks, diseases transmitted by contaminated food and water, sexually transmitted infections, or health issues related to the heat or cold.

All travellers should ensure they have [adequate travel health insurance](#).

A list of useful resources including advice on how to reduce the risk of certain health problems is available below.

## Resources

- [Food and water hygiene](#)
- [Insect and tick bite avoidance](#)
- [Personal safety](#)
- [Sexually transmitted infections](#)
- [Sun protection](#)

## Vaccine recommendations

Details of vaccination recommendations and requirements are provided below.

### All Travellers

Travellers should be up to date with routine vaccination courses and boosters as [recommended in the UK](#). These vaccinations include for example [measles-mumps-rubella \(MMR\)](#) vaccine and diphtheria-tetanus-polio vaccine.

Those who may be at increased risk of an infectious disease due to their work, lifestyle choice, or certain underlying health problems should be up to date with additional recommended vaccines. See the individual chapters of the 'Green Book' [Immunisation against infectious disease](#) for further details.

### Certificate Requirements

Please read the information below carefully, as certificate requirements may be relevant to certain travellers only. For travellers further details, if required, should be sought from their healthcare professional.

- There is no risk of yellow fever in Cuba, however, there is a certificate requirement.
- Under International Health Regulations (2005), a yellow fever vaccination certificate is required for travellers over 9 months of age arriving from countries with risk of yellow fever transmission and for travellers having transited for more than 12 hours through an airport of a country with risk of yellow fever transmission.
- Due to an outbreak of yellow fever in Brazil 2017, country certificate requirements may be updated at short notice. Please check Pan American Health Organisation for [updated or additional requirements for the international certificate of vaccination or prophylaxis](#).
- According to World Health Organization (WHO), from 11 July 2016 (for all countries), the yellow fever certificate will be valid for the duration of the life of the person vaccinated. As a consequence, a valid certificate, presented by arriving travellers, cannot be rejected on the grounds that more than ten years have passed since the date vaccination became effective as stated on the certificate; and that boosters or revaccination cannot be required. See [WHO Q&A](#).
- [View the WHO list of countries with risk of yellow fever transmission](#).

### Most Travellers

The vaccines in this section are recommended for most travellers visiting this country. Information on these vaccines can be found by clicking on the blue arrow. Vaccines are listed alphabetically.

#### Tetanus

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Tetanus is caused by a toxin released from *Clostridium tetani* and occurs worldwide. Tetanus bacteria are present in soil and manure and may be introduced through open wounds such as a puncture wound, burn or scratch.

## Prevention

Travellers should thoroughly clean all wounds and seek appropriate medical attention.

## Tetanus vaccination

- Travellers should have completed a primary vaccination course according to the UK schedule.
- If travelling to a country where medical facilities may be limited, a booster dose of a tetanus-containing vaccine is recommended if the last dose was more than ten years ago even if five doses of vaccine have been given previously.

Country specific information on medical facilities may be found in the 'health' section of the [FCO foreign travel advice](#) website.

[Tetanus in brief](#)

## Some Travellers

The vaccines in this section are recommended for some travellers visiting this country. Information on when these vaccines should be considered can be found by clicking on the arrow. Vaccines are listed alphabetically.

### Hepatitis A

Hepatitis A is a viral infection transmitted through contaminated food and water or by direct contact with an infectious person. Symptoms are often mild or absent in young children, but the disease becomes more serious with advancing age. Recovery can vary from weeks to months. Following hepatitis A illness immunity is lifelong.

Those at increased risk include travellers visiting friends and relatives, long-stay travellers, and those visiting areas of poor sanitation.

## Prevention

All travellers should take care with personal, food and water hygiene.

## Hepatitis A vaccination

Vaccination is recommended for those whose activities put them at increased risk. This includes:

- those who are staying with or visiting the local population
- frequent and/or long-stay travellers to areas where sanitation and food hygiene are likely to be poor
- adventure travellers visiting rural areas and staying in basic accommodation such as backpackers

- those with existing medical conditions such as liver disease or haemophilia
- men who have sex with men
- injecting drug users
- those who may be exposed to the virus through their work
- those going to areas of hepatitis A outbreaks who have limited access to safe water and medical care

[Hepatitis A in brief](#)

## Hepatitis B

Hepatitis B is a viral infection; it is transmitted by exposure to infected blood or body fluids. This mostly occurs during sexual contact or as a result of blood-to-blood contact (for example from contaminated equipment during medical and dental procedures, tattooing or body piercing procedures, and sharing of intravenous needles). Mothers with the virus can also transmit the infection to their baby during childbirth.

## Hepatitis B in Cuba

2% or more of the population are known or thought to be persistently infected with the hepatitis B virus (intermediate/high prevalence).

## Prevention

Travellers should avoid contact with blood or body fluids. This includes:

- avoiding unprotected sexual intercourse.
- avoiding tattooing, piercing, public shaving, and acupuncture (unless sterile equipment is used).
- not sharing needles or other injection equipment.
- following universal precautions if working in a medical/dental/high risk setting.

A sterile medical equipment kit may be helpful when travelling to resource poor areas.

## Hepatitis B vaccination

Vaccination could be considered for all travellers, and is recommended for those whose activities or medical history put them at increased risk including:

- those who may have unprotected sex.
- those who may be exposed to contaminated needles through injecting drug use.
- those who may be exposed to blood or body fluids through their work (e.g. health workers).
- those who may be exposed to contaminated needles as a result of having medical or dental care e.g. those with pre-existing medical conditions and those travelling for medical care abroad including those intending to receive renal dialysis overseas.
- long-stay travellers
- those who are participating in contact sports.
- families adopting children from this country.

[Hepatitis B in brief](#)

## Rabies

Rabies is a viral infection which is usually transmitted following contact with the saliva of an infected animal most often via a bite, scratch or lick to an open wound or mucous membrane (such as on the eye, nose or mouth). Although many different animals can transmit the virus, most cases follow a bite or scratch from an infected dog. In some parts of the world, bats are an important source of infection.

Rabies symptoms can take some time to develop, but when they do, the condition is almost always fatal.

The risk of exposure is increased by certain activities and length of stay (see below). Children are at increased risk as they are less likely to avoid contact with animals and to report a bite, scratch or lick.

## Rabies in Cuba

Rabies has been reported in domestic and wild animals in this country. Bats may also carry rabies-like viruses.

## Prevention

- Travellers should avoid contact with all animals. Rabies is preventable with prompt post-exposure treatment.
- Following a possible exposure, wounds should be thoroughly cleansed and an urgent local medical assessment sought, even if the wound appears trivial.
- Post-exposure treatment and advice should be in accordance with [national guidelines](#).

## Rabies vaccination

Pre-exposure vaccinations are recommended for travellers whose activities put them at increased risk including:

- those at risk due to their work (e.g. laboratory staff working with the virus, those working with animals or health workers who may be caring for infected patients).
- those travelling to areas where access to post-exposure treatment and medical care is limited.
- those planning higher risk activities such as running or cycling.
- long-stay travellers (more than one month).

A full course of pre-exposure vaccines simplifies and shortens the course of post-exposure treatment and removes the need for rabies immunoglobulin which is in short supply world-wide.

[Rabies in brief](#)

## Typhoid

Typhoid is a bacterial infection transmitted through contaminated food and water. Previous typhoid illness may only partially protect against re-infection.

Travellers who will have access to safe food and water are likely to be at low risk. Those at increased risk include travellers visiting friends and relatives, frequent or long-stay travellers to areas where sanitation and food hygiene are likely to be poor.

## Typhoid in Cuba

Typhoid fever is known or presumed to occur in this country.

### Prevention

All travellers should take care with personal, food and water hygiene.

### Typhoid vaccination

- Both oral and injectable typhoid vaccinations are available, and vaccination is recommended for laboratory personnel who may handle the bacteria for their work.
- Vaccination could be considered for those whose activities put them at increased risk (see above).

[Typhoid in brief](#)

## Malaria

Malaria is a serious illness caused by infection of red blood cells with a parasite called Plasmodium. The disease is transmitted by mosquitoes which predominantly feed between dusk and dawn.

Symptoms usually begin with a fever (high temperature) of 38°C (100°F) or more. Other symptoms may include feeling cold and shivery, headache, nausea, vomiting and aching muscles. Symptoms may appear between eight days and one year after the infected mosquito bite.

Prompt diagnosis and treatment is required as people with malaria can deteriorate quickly. Those at higher risk of malaria, or of severe complications from malaria, include pregnant women, infants and young children, the elderly, travellers who do not have a functioning spleen and those visiting friends and relatives.

### Prevention

Travellers should follow an ABCD guide to preventing malaria:

**Awareness of the risk** – Risk depends on the specific location, season of travel, length of stay, activities and type of accommodation.

**Bite prevention** – Travellers should take mosquito bite avoidance measures.

**Chemoprophylaxis** – Travellers should take antimalarials (malaria prevention tablets) if appropriate for the area (see below). No antimalarials are 100% effective but taking them in combination with mosquito bite avoidance measures will give substantial protection against malaria.

**Diagnosis** – Travellers who develop a fever of 38°C [100°F] or higher more than one week after being in a malaria risk area, or who develop any symptoms suggestive of malaria within a year of return should seek immediate medical care. Emergency standby treatment may be considered for those going to remote areas with limited access to medical attention.

## Risk Areas

- There is a very low risk of malaria in Cuba: **awareness of risk** and **bite avoidance** recommended.

## Recommended Antimalarials

There are no antimalarial drugs recommended for Cuba.

## Resources

- [Malaria in brief](#)
- [Malaria factsheet](#)
- [Insect and tick bite avoidance](#)
- [Guidelines for malaria prevention in travellers from the United Kingdom](#)

## Other risks

The risks below may be present in all or part of the country and are presented alphabetically.

### Dengue

Dengue is a viral infection transmitted by mosquitoes which predominantly feed between dawn and dusk. It causes a flu-like illness, which can occasionally develop into a more serious life-threatening form of the disease. Severe dengue is rare in travellers.

The mosquitoes that transmit dengue are most abundant in towns, cities and surrounding areas. All travellers to dengue areas are at risk.

### Dengue in Cuba

There is a risk of dengue in this country.

### Prevention

- All travellers should avoid mosquito bites particularly between dawn and dusk.
- There is currently no medication or vaccination available for travellers to prevent dengue.

[Dengue in brief](#)

### Zika Virus

Zika virus (ZIKV) is a viral infection transmitted by mosquitoes which predominantly feed between dawn and dusk. A small number of cases of sexual transmission of ZIKV have also been reported. Most people infected with ZIKV have no symptoms. When symptoms do occur they are usually mild and short-lived. Serious complications and deaths are not common. However, there is now scientific consensus that Zika virus is a cause of congenital Zika syndrome (microcephaly and other congenital anomalies) and Guillain-Barré syndrome.

## Zika virus in Cuba

This country is considered to have a **high risk of ZIKV transmission**. **Pregnant women are advised to postpone non-essential travel** until after pregnancy. Details of specific affected areas within this country are not available.

### Prevention

- All travellers should avoid mosquito bites particularly between dawn and dusk.
- There is no vaccination or medication to prevent ZIKV infection.
- It is recommended that pregnant women planning to travel to areas with a high risk of ZIKV transmission should postpone non-essential travel until after pregnancy.
- Women should avoid becoming pregnant while travelling in, and for 8 weeks after leaving an area with active ZIKV transmission **or 8 weeks after last possible ZIKV exposure**
- Couples should follow [guidance on prevention of sexual transmission of Zika](#) and avoid conception while travelling and for up to 6 months on return.
- If a woman develops symptoms compatible with ZIKV infection, it is recommended she avoids becoming pregnant for a further 8 weeks following recovery.
- Pregnant women who visited this country while pregnant, or who become pregnant within 8 weeks of leaving this country **or within 8 weeks after last possible ZIKV exposure**, should contact their GP, obstetrician or midwife for further advice, even if they have not been unwell. [Further information about when to perform fetal ultrasound scanning, and, if necessary, referral to the local fetal medicine service is available.](#)

### Preventing sexual transmission

- Most cases of ZIKV are acquired via mosquito bites but cases of sexual transmission of ZIKV are occasionally reported.
- [See further information for pregnant women, their partners and couples planning pregnancy.](#)

[See detailed guidance on factors to consider when assessing the risk of ZIKV.](#)

[Zika virus in brief](#)

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