

# IMMUNIZATION INFORMATION FOR MEXICO

Although the Mexican government does not require any immunizations for travel in the Yucatan Peninsula, we have listed several immunizations that you may wish to consider. These recommendations are based on the idea that we will be traveling "off the beaten path" and in rural areas. However, we do not want to cause alarm. **We want to emphasize, in general, Yucatan is considered to be a very safe travel destination.** Generally, the worst illness is traveler's diarrhea. Nevertheless, the U.S. Center for Disease Control (CDC) does recommend several immunizations. As with *any* medical recommendation, we strongly suggest that you consult your physician to make the final decision about immunizations.

## RECOMMENDED VACCINATIONS:

### Hepatitis A

We recommend **active immunization** with Hepatitis A vaccine, such as Havrix, VAQTA or passive immunization with Immune Globulin (IG). The active immunization is preferred, and is usually good for 1 year or more. **The CDC states that travelers are considered 'protected' four weeks after receiving the initial vaccine dose.** *Immune Globulin* should be given if the vaccine is administered *less than four weeks before travel*. This is important, for we will be traveling in rural areas, and we cannot control *all* aspects of food preparation. **PLEASE DO NOT DELAY. For more information check out the CDC website: <http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/diseases/hepatitis/a/faq.htm>**

### Typhoid

The chance of exposure to Typhoid is very remote in the areas where we travel. However, to be on the safe side, the CDC does recommend vaccination. Although there are several choices of vaccines, one recommended by the CDC is ViCPS (Typhim Vi, Pasteur Merieux). **This injection requires only one week to be effective.** There is little harm in this extra precaution, even though we do not travel in areas with a history of Typhoid. **For more information check out the CDC website: <http://www.cdc.gov/travel/diseases/typhoid.htm>**

### General Vaccinations

All routine vaccines (such as DTP or Td, Hib, MMR, polio, varicella, influenza and pneumococcal) should be kept up-to-date as a matter of good health practice.

## General Health Concerns

### Water Treatment

There is no doubt that we will boil water, carry bottled water, and have our own purification systems. Most of the locals boil their water, and they are used to it in our homestay situations. Bottled water is available everywhere.

### Gastrointestinal Problems

We will pay close attention to our choice of food and beverages. However, when and if you suffer from diarrhea, oral rehydration is essential along with two other interventions we have found to be very effective. We would like each participant to bring a supply of **Pepto Bismol caplets (not tablets)**. This treats the **symptoms** of intestinal illness caused by bacteria.

### Dehydration

Temperatures in the Yucatan in mid July can often approach 100 degrees Fahrenheit. Our staff will be continually monitoring students for the effects of heat, and encouraging the consumption of liquids. We ask that students prepare by packing lightweight summer clothing, suntan lotion, a water bottle and a wide brimmed sun-shading hat. Ample supplies of drinking water will always be available.

### Sunshine

We take all reasonable safety precautions in traveling, including monitoring students' exposure to the intense sun in Puerto Rico. We are aware that a successful trip is dependent on monitoring and responding to the physical and emotional health of each participant. We take care to structure the program so the participants have time to stay cool & out of the sun, but students must also follow a few basic precautions, including the frequent application of sunscreen or sunblock. The staff will help to remind everyone, but please be sure to pack sunblock, and a lip balm with a high SPF.