

Information for preventing diarrheic diseases

Extract from the WHO Guide regarding international travels

- Consult a specialist for the sickness risks, necessary vaccinations and other mandatory measures for the geographic area where you travel.
- Include in your medical travel kit oral re-hydration salts.

Main food precautions. What and how do we eat?

Following recommendations are available for all cases, from bought food from an ambulant seller to the meal served at a luxury restaurant:

- Prepared food which is stored at room temperature for more hours represents one of the main causes for food origin maladies. Make sure your food is well boiled and warm when you eat it.
- Avoid raw food, excepting fruits and vegetables which can be washed and peeled. Avoid fruits which have an adherent peel. The key word is **boil or peel, if not, throw away!**
- Ice cream of uncertain provenience may frequently be contaminated and may produce illness. If you have doubts do not eat it.
- In many countries, some sea fruit species and fish may contain bio-toxins, even if they were boiled. Get information at your destination!
- Pasteurized milk must be well boiled.
- In case of doubt on the drinkable water, boil it and drink it after it gets cold or drink bottled water.
- Avoid using ice if you are not sure on the water source.
- Tea, hot coffee, sparkling drinks, wine, beer and bottled fruit juice can be consumed with no risk.

What can we do in case of diarrhea?

- Most of diarrhea episodes cure with no treatment in a few days. It is important to avoid **dehydration**.
- It is important to drink enough liquids at the beginning of the diarrhea – boiled water, bottled water, treated or tea. You can also drink fruit juice (diluted with drinkable water) or soups.
- If diarrhea persists, prepare and drink a solution of re-hydration salts and eat normally.

What quantity of liquids or oral re-hydration salts must we drink?

- For children aged below 2 years old it is recommended $\frac{1}{4}$ - $\frac{1}{2}$ measure (50- 100 ml) after each diarrheic stool.

- For children aged between 2 and 10 years old it is recommended $\frac{1}{2}$ - 1 measure (100-200ml) after each diarrheic stool.
- For children over 12 years old and adults there is no recommended limit.

When is it advisable to visit the doctor?

If diarrhea lasts for more than 3 days;

- If the stool is frequent and they contain blood;
- If you throw up repeatedly and have fever;
- If other symptoms appear.

Other recommendations:

- If there are no medical services nearby and if you eliminate blood in your stool, you can follow an antibiotics treatment / Cotrimoxazol according to medical recommendations previous to the trip.
- Using antibiotics for prophylactic purpose is not recommended.
- Anti-diarrheic treatment is not recommended but can be administered but they can be taken with liquids and only for adults for suppressing the symptoms. They cannot be administered to children.