

Before You Depart for Haiti

Vaccinations

Recommended By Centers for Disease Control

The vaccine recommendations on this page are based on diseases previously observed in Haiti and the possibility for outbreaks in the aftermath of the earthquake. At this time, vaccines for diseases such as polio, cholera, and meningitis are **not** recommended.

- **Routine:** Be sure that you are up to date on vaccines such as measles/mumps/rubella (MMR), diphtheria/pertussis/tetanus (DPT), polio, seasonal and H1N1 flu, and varicella.
- **Tetanus** ***It is especially important to have a current tetanus shot.***
- **Hepatitis A or immune globulin (IG):** Even if your departure is imminent, one dose of hepatitis A vaccine provides adequate short-term protection for healthy people. For long term protection, a second dose is required 6–18 months after the first dose, depending on the brand of vaccine used.
- **Hepatitis B:** If your departure is imminent, the first in a 3-dose series (day 0, 1 month and 6 months) may provide some protection. An accelerated dosing schedule may be used (doses at days 0, 7, and at 21–30 days with a booster at 12 months).
- **Typhoid:** There are 2 vaccines available for typhoid prevention. The injectable vaccine may be preferable to the oral vaccine in cases where travel is imminent. The oral vaccine requires refrigeration and 4 tablets taken every other day over one week.
- **Malaria** occurs in all parts of Haiti. Ways to prevent malaria include the following:
 - Taking a prescription antimalarial drug
 - Using insect repellent and wearing long pants and sleeves to prevent mosquito bites
 - Sleeping in air-conditioned or well-screened rooms or using bed nets

No antimalarial drug is 100% protective, so it is important to use all three ways to prevent malaria.

All of the following antimalarial drugs are equal options for preventing malaria in Haiti:

Atovaquone/proguanil (Malarone), chloroquine, doxycycline, or mefloquine. Each drug has its own side effects, contraindications, and precautions. You will need to talk to your doctor to decide which of these drugs would be best for you, depending on your current health, medical history, drug allergies, and specific needs.

For Traveler's anti-diarrhea medication, ask your doctor or health care provider. *This is highly recommended.*

A Special Note about Antimalarial Drugs

You should purchase your antimalarial drugs before travel. Drugs purchased overseas may not be manufactured according to United States standards and may not be effective. They also may be dangerous, contain counterfeit medications or contaminants, or be combinations of drugs that are not safe to use.

Halofantrine (marketed as Halfan) is widely used overseas to treat malaria. CDC recommends that you do **NOT** use halofantrine because of serious heart-related side effects, including deaths. You should avoid using antimalarial drugs that are not recommended **unless** you have been diagnosed with life-threatening malaria and no other options are immediately available.