

KEEP SAFE ON HOLIDAY

At Ramblers Worldwide Holidays we hope that you will not only have a fantastic holiday with us but also one which is as safe as possible. In the UK, we are fortunate that health and safety requirements are, in general, quite strictly enforced. In many other countries, this may not be the case. What is law at home might not be the 'norm' when you are abroad. Please take a few minutes to read these notes

TRAVEL SAFETY

Please let us know if you have any pre-existing medical conditions that may require assistance at the airport, cruise terminal or railway station.

In the Air:

Please take time to listen to the cabin safety announcement and to read any safety cards provided by the airline.

Deep Vein Thrombosis: You may be aware of press reports concerning the causes of deep vein thrombosis, which can be caused by immobility. One of the recommended measures for reducing the risk whilst flying is to wear compression hosiery. Flight socks are available from most chemists and are proven to help with blood circulation and reducing the build up of fluid that can cause this condition.

Exercise during the flight and limiting your consumption of dehydrating drinks, such as alcohol and coffee, may also help reduce any risk.

Some people are more susceptible to DVT, including those having undergone recent surgery, or with a family history of DVT, undergoing hormone treatment, suffering from varicose veins or with blood clotting abnormalities. If you are concerned or feel that you might fall into a higher risk group we recommend that you discuss your travel plans with your doctor. More general information can be found on the Department of Health website: <http://www.dh.gov.uk> (then just type 'DVT' into the search field).

On-Board Ship:

For those clients taking part on one of our Cruise

and Walk tours, we would ask that you make yourselves acquainted with the safety procedures on-board your cruise ship.

Travelling on Foreign Roads:

You may find that you are travelling on poor roads and/or in coaches or buses that do not have seatbelts. If a coach/bus has seatbelts, we recommend that you use them. If the vehicle does not have seatbelts, where possible try to avoid sitting in the front seats, in the middle seat of the back row or on any seats immediately behind a central exit if there is no barrier in front of the seat. Make sure that all luggage is stowed safely and is not blocking the aisles. Be careful when getting on or off the bus, checking that the vehicle has stopped completely.

ACCOMMODATION SAFETY

Fire Safety:

Safety standards at hotels: Please note that safety standards overseas may differ from those expected in the UK, with only a minority of hotels currently meeting the EU recommendations on fire safety in full – even within Europe itself – and a general acceptance of safety standards may yet take some time. We endeavour to ensure that our hotels meet local health and safety standards and provide accommodation that is as safe as reasonably possible given local conditions. We work with our overseas hoteliers and other suppliers to raise standards and resolve any issues of concern.

Your leader will indicate the fire exits at your accommodation. It is important that you familiarise yourself with these as you may need to use them in the unlikely event of an emergency. It is always worthwhile making sure that you know how to find your way out of your hotel shortly after arriving at your room; it's better to identify your escape route at leisure than in a possible emergency.

Lift Safety:

Do not use lifts in case of a fire. Do not smoke in lifts. Some hotels use lifts without internal closing doors – this gives the effect of the wall moving. If this is the case in your accommodation, please keep away from this part of the lift whilst it is in motion.

Balcony Safety:

Please do not sit or stand on balcony walls or railings and exercise special care when using balconies if you have been drinking alcohol.

Electrical Safety:

Please use an adaptor appropriate for the country you are visiting and make sure that items such as hairdryers are using the voltage applicable. Some hotel rooms are fitted with low voltage circuits and this means that you cannot use electrical items that draw heavy current such as travel kettles, hairdryers etc. Turn off and unplug all electrical items at night and when you leave the room. Please be careful not to leave wet towels or clothes drying on electrical heaters – this can cause a fire.

Food and Drink Safety:

Food in foreign countries may not be what you are used to at home! Some people can suffer from short-term stomach upsets caused by a different diet, a change in the temperature or too much alcohol! If you want to be extra careful, we advise that you drink bottled water rather than tap water (make sure that the bottle is properly sealed) and that you avoid ice in drinks. The same rule applies to brushing your teeth in tap water. If you are at all unsure of hygiene, err on the side of caution and brush your teeth using bottled water. If you are in any doubt, we suggest that you don't eat fruit or vegetables that you cannot peel yourself. Wash your hands after using the toilet and before eating. Make sure that food is cooked through and pay special attention to any food bought from a street seller and make sure that fruit bought from the market is washed in bottled water before eating.

Swimming Pool Safety:

Many people enjoy using swimming pools whilst on holiday and if you follow a few simple rules, you can help reduce the risk of an accident:

Don't use the swimming pool if you have been drinking alcohol, taken drugs, if you have just eaten or if you are feeling unwell. Some medication can make you drowsy or disorientated and, if this applies to you, don't swim.

Follow 'Pool Rules' and observe 'No Diving' warnings where applicable.

Be aware that some surfaces around pools can be slippery when wet – don't run!

Keep within a depth where you are comfortable. Some pools have 'shelves' leading to sudden depth changes.

Shower before entering the water and don't use the pool if you have any cuts or open wounds.

Keep long hair tied back or wear a swimming cap – keep hair away from filters etc.

Many swimming pools abroad do not have a lifeguard on duty. Please be vigilant.

GENERAL SAFETY

Be Safe in the Sun

The temperature when abroad can often be a lot higher than we are used to in the UK! Help prevent sunburn by using a good sun cream and lip salve, wear a hat to protect your head and the back of your neck (especially important if you have little or no hair), keep hydrated by drinking regularly and remember that alcohol is very dehydrating.

Insects

If you are travelling to a country where malaria is a risk, visit your GP for advice. For further information visit www.malariahotspots.co.uk. Mosquito bites in general can cause great discomfort to some people and using appropriate insect repellents can help you avoid being bitten. Travellers (especially those taking part on some walking holidays) should be familiar with the ways in which they can help themselves prevent being bitten by a tick. Diseases such as tick-borne encephalitis and Lyme Disease can occur if the tick is infected when it bites. Wearing long

trousers tucked into socks and use of a DEET-based repellent especially when walking in grassy areas can help. There is useful information available on www.fco.gov.uk , www.fitfortravel.nhs.uk and www.nathnac.org .

Beach Safety

Beaches and the opportunity to swim in the sea are a real attraction for many holidaymakers. Don't take risks – keep safe!

Watch where the locals swim !

Don't swim alone – let others know where you will be and when you expect to be back.

Don't drink alcohol and swim. Be careful if you have taken medication.

Observing warning flags and notices.

Check tide times and whether the area is subject to strong currents or rip tides. Don't get cut-off by an incoming tide.

Clothing and Footwear

A walking or sightseeing holiday can be ruined by not taking appropriate clothing or footwear. Check out the likely temperatures and altitudes for the places you will be visiting and remember that even if it is very hot when you start off your walk, the temperature can drop dramatically at higher altitudes. Rapid changes in temperature are not uncommon in the hills or mountains – be prepared! Be sensitive to other cultures and religions and dress so as not to cause offence. Make sure that your clothes are comfortable and give good protection against the weather and biting insects. Don't forget gloves, a sunhat and a hat to keep your head warm.

Wearing the correct footwear is a vital part of an enjoyable walking or sightseeing holiday. We give lots of information on footwear in our General Information booklet which is sent out with your Booking Confirmation. Don't wear shoes or boots for the first time on holiday. Wear them in and make sure that they are not going to rub or cause blisters. Make sure that you can wear them with suitable socks.

Safety on Walks

Please ensure that you are fit enough for your chosen grade. It is recommended that you do some walking or exercise in the weeks prior to departure and, if appropriate, practice carrying a full rucksack. Ensure footwear is broken-in and comfortable. Although you should not book a holiday beyond your ability, should you have decided to take part in a holiday of much easier grading than your ability, please bear in mind that the pace will very likely be slower than you may wish.

Health: it is advisable to take a small first-aid kit with you including a remedy for stomach upsets. If you are diabetic, or suffer from vertigo, heart problems, asthma, epilepsy or some other disability we or your leader need to know about, then please advise us in writing. If you have not done so already, let us know so we can ensure that your leader is made aware of your condition. Your insurance company must also be made aware of any pre-existing conditions that may affect the validity of your policy.

Should you have any pre-existing medical conditions or be medically qualified, please speak to our leader at the earliest opportunity.

Certain destinations outside Europe have mandatory requirements for inoculations. Any additional information you may need for the area that you are visiting will be included in the Holiday Information Sheet or Section 2 (Country Information) of our General Information Booklet. It is however, strongly recommended that you seek advice from your GP or a specialist travel vaccination centre. A charge may be made for vaccinations or inoculations. More information can be found on the NHS immunisation website: www.immunisation.nhs.uk. Please refer to the Department of Health leaflet 'Health Advice for Travellers' for further details. The World Health Organisation also has a travel health information website at <http://www.who.int/ith>

The Department of Health leaflet 'T7.1 - Health Advice for Travellers' includes details of the European Health Insurance Card (EHIC). Copies can be obtained free of charge from most Post Offices. The leaflet can also be viewed and

downloaded from <http://www.dh.gov.uk>(enter "Health Advice for Travellers (T7.1) into the search field. You can pick up an EHIC application pack at most post offices or call the EHIC Applications Line on 0845 606 2030. You can apply for your EHIC online at <http://www.dh.gov.uk> or www.ehic.org.uk. A new application is also required if you change address. **Please check that your EHIC is still valid.**

It is advisable to take a valid European Health Insurance Card when travelling to any of the following countries: Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France including Réunion, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, The Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden and Switzerland.

The health advice found in this document has been taken from the Department of Health's leaflet '**T7.1 – Health advice for travellers**'. You can obtain a copy of this leaflet from most post offices, by calling 0870 155 54 55 or by downloading a copy from www.dh.gov.uk/en/Policyandguidance/Healthadvicefortravellers/index.htm. This leaflet is accompanied by an application form for the European Health Insurance Card (EHIC).

Please note that Ramblers Worldwide Holidays staff are not qualified to give medical advice; please discuss any travel health concerns with your GP.

More information can be obtained via the Foreign Office Travel Advice web site on <http://www.fco.gov.uk> or from the Department of Health International Relations Unit, Room 518, Richmond House, 79 Whitehall, London SW1A 2NS