

Destination Guide for Mexico

Overview

Destination Risk Levels

- Medium Medical Risk for Mexico
- Medium Travel Risk for Mexico
- Low Travel Risk for Yucatan state; La Paz, Los Cabos (Baja California Sur state)
- High Travel Risk for States and other areas affected by heightened levels of violence between organised criminal groups

States and other areas affected by heightened levels of violence between organised criminal groups: HIGH

Baja California state: The entire state, except the municipalities of Ensenada and San Quintin.

Chihuahua state: The entire state, including the capital Chihuahua City.

Colima state: The entire state, including the capital Colima City.

Guanajuato state: Areas south of Guanajuato, San Felipe and San Miguel de Allende municipalities towards the borders with Jalisco, Michoacan, and Queretaro states.

Guerrero state: The entire state, including the capital Chilpancingo.

Jalisco state: Municipalities bordering Colima and south-western Michoacan; areas north-east of Mexicacan, Jalostotitlan, San Miguel el Alto, and San Julian towards the borders with Aguascalientes, Guanajuato, and Zacatecas states; and areas north of Tequila municipality towards the borders with Nayarit and Zacatecas states.

Mexico state: Areas east of Villa del Carbon; north-east of Temoaya, Otzolotepec and Xonacatlan; north-west of Atizapan de Zaragoza, and Naucalpan de Juarez towards the borders with Mexico City and Hidalgo state; west of Temascalapa, Teotihuacan, Acolman, Atenco, and Texcoco towards the borders with Mexico City and Hidalgo state; south of Texcoco; north of Juchitepec, Temamatla, Cocotitlan, and Tlalmanalco towards the borders with Mexico City and Puebla state; and south-west of Ixtapan del Oro, Valle de Bravo, Temascaltepec, Zinacantepec, Villa Guerrero, and Ixtapan de la Sal towards the borders with Guerrero and Michoacan states.

Michoacan state: The entire state, including the capital Morelia.

Morelos state: The entire state, including the capital Cuautla.

Nuevo Leon state: Areas north of Garcia, General Escobedo, Apodaca, Juarez, Cadereyta and General Teran municipalities extending to the borders with Coahuila and Tamaulipas states.

Sinaloa state: The entire state, excluding Ahome and Mazatlan municipalities.

Sonora state: The entire state, excluding the capital Hermosillo.

Tabasco state: The entire state, excluding Centro municipality, containing the capital Villahermosa.

Tamaulipas state: The entire state, excluding the Tampico metropolitan area (comprising Altamira, Ciudad Madero and Tampico municipalities).

Veracruz state: Areas north-west of Papantla municipality towards the borders with Hidalgo, Puebla, San Luis Potosi and Tamaulipas states; south-east of Boca del Rio and Piedras Negra; south of Hueyacan de Ocampo and Sotepan; west of Soconusco; and north-west of Santiago Tuxtla Hueyapan, and San Juan Evangelista towards the border with Oaxaca state.

Zacatecas state: The entire state, including the capital Zacatecas city.

Northern states

The north-western states of **Baja California**, **Sonora**, and **Sinaloa** have long been afflicted by violence related to disputes between organised crime groups, including the various factions falling under the umbrella of the Sinaloa Cartel. The region remains strategic for drug and human trafficking into the US.

Border cities of Baja California, including the state capital Mexicali and Tijuana, face exceptionally high levels of violent crime. Areas of Baja California south of Tijuana, including Ensenada and the Valle de Guadalupe area, pose comparably lower risks of violent crime, though travel to remote areas should be undertaken with precautions.

Neighbouring Sonora has seen an increase in violence associated with disputes between various cells of the Sinaloa Cartel and other criminal networks over the past years. These groups are reportedly fighting over control of lucrative drug- and migrant-trafficking routes into the US. Associated violence has for the most part spared the state capital Hermosillo, where petty and street crime are the most prevalent risks.

Sinaloa, especially the state capital Culiacan and mountainous areas to the east, experiences high levels of drug-related crime, including armed carjackings. Security operations targeting the Sinaloa Cartel's leadership have been known to trigger backlash in parts the state, posing incidental risks to bystanders and significant disruption to travel. While not exempt from an organised criminal presence, associated violence has for the most part spared the municipality of Ahome, which contains the city of Los Mochis and Mazatlan.

Chihuahua registers one of the highest kidnapping rates in the country. Sonora has seen a state-wide escalation in violence related to organised crime in recent years, though the state Hermosillo has thus far been spared. **Zacatecas** sits in a strategic position at the crossroads of key federal highways connecting ports along the Pacific and Atlantic coasts to the northern border cities.

In north-eastern Mexico, disputes between warring factions of the Gulf and Northeast cartels frame the security environment of **Tamaulipas** and several municipalities of **Nuevo Leon** to the north of the Monterrey metropolitan area. In addition to drug trafficking into the US, fuel theft has played an increasingly prominent role in the Mexican north-east in recent years. Rates of armed carjacking, extortion and kidnapping have remained high in much of the north, especially in rural areas. The security environment in the seaport of Tampico, to the far south of Tamaulipas, has seen significant improvements in recent years.

Central states

Despite being the bastion of one of the largest criminal networks in Mexico, the security environment in most of **Jalisco**, including Guadalajara and Puerto Vallarta, is largely stable. However, municipalities to the far south and far north see spillover armed clashes from disputes associated with the New Generation Jalisco Cartel's (CJNG) expansion into surrounding states.

Colima and **Guanajuato** remain embroiled in turf wars involving the CJNG and other organised crime groups. Elevated violence in Colima along the Pacific coast relates to the seaport Manzanillo's key importance as a point of entry for synthetic drug precursors from Asia. Criminal conflicts in Guanajuato revolve around the state's dense fuel pipeline network and local drug-dealing rackets along the industrial corridor, which stretches from Leon to Celaya along Federal Highway 45. Such violence has largely spared the overwhelmingly touristic areas to the north, including the capital Guanajuato City and San Miguel de Allende.

Michoacan faces very high levels of violence associated with turf wars between the CJNG and local criminal groups over the control of lands for agriculture, particularly avocado produce. The state also faces occasional social unrest by indigenous communities, agricultural workers and teachers' unions.

Violent, often gang-related crime remains rampant in the municipalities of **Mexico state** comprising the Mexico City metropolitan area. More rural areas to the south-west of Toluca have a heightened presence of organised crime groups from neighbouring states. **Morelos**, to the south of the capital Mexico City, faces persistent violence related to drug-trafficking and local extortion rackets. The state consistently ranks among the highest for kidnapping, which overwhelmingly targets local businesspeople.

Along the Gulf Coast, parts of **Veracruz** experience persistent violence driven by drug, fuel and human trafficking, as well as local extortion rackets. These areas include the Huasteca and Papaloapan Basin sub-regions, as well as the environs of Acayucan, Poza Rica and Tuxpam. Meanwhile, the security environment in the metropolitan area of Veracruz City, the state capital Xalapa and major urban centres such as Coatzacoalcos, Cordoba, and Orizaba has improved significantly in recent years.

Southern states

Guerrero is a hotspot of organised criminal activity, political violence and social unrest. Turf wars between La Nueva Familia Michoacana and various local gangs, including 'Los Tlacos' and 'Los Ardillos', frame developments. Targeted attacks on local government officials often occur in the context of these disputes. Disruptive protests by teachers' unions, student teachers (locally known as *normalistas*), agrarian organisations and other local social actors are also a recurring feature of the security environment.

The security environment in **Chiapas**, Mexico's southernmost state, has deteriorated significantly in recent years. Escalating conflict between organised criminal groups, notably the Sinaloa Cartel and the CJNG, is the key driver of the change. Operations by a wide variety of armed actors, including paramilitaries and vigilante groups, also play a role in this landscape.

Yucatan state; La Paz, Los Cabos (Baja California Sur state): LOW

The south-eastern state of **Yucatan**, including its capital Merida, has consistently maintained the lowest rates of violent crime in Mexico. The security environment is generally benign. Organised crime maintains a minimal and largely non-violent presence compared to other parts of the country. Standard precautions against petty and street crime, including potential scams, should be taken when visiting touristic hotspots, such as the Yucatan's numerous archeological sites. Protests pertaining to local socio-economic and environmental issues are generally peaceful and sporadic.

Atmospherics in the **Baja California Sur's** capital La Paz and the popular resort cities of San Jose del Cabo and Cabo San Lucas are benign for most travellers. While an organised crime presence exists in La Paz and Los Cabos, associated violence is minimal compared to other major coastal resort cities in Mexico and highly unlikely to impact visitors. Travellers should take standard precautions against petty crime in touristic hotspots, including potential scams, and avoid outlying areas where violent crime is more likely to occur. Protests are relatively uncommon and generally peaceful.

Standing Travel Advice

- Travel to HIGH travel risk areas should be for essential purposes and should be arranged in close liaison with local contacts. Workforce should carefully plan all aspects of their itinerary and be confident in their accommodation, transport, communication and security arrangements prior to travel. Measures include travelling with a private, low-profile vehicle and trusted driver and undertaking movement in daylight hours only. Journey plans should allow sufficient time for delays, such as a breakdown. Given the difficulties associated with arranging secure accommodation in US border areas, avoid overnight stays and arrange lodging in the US where possible.

- Crime poses a significant risk in Mexico and criminals are often armed; take stringent security precautions at all times. If accosted by a criminal, assume that the assailant is armed and do nothing to resist or antagonise them.
- Keep a low profile and avoid displaying valuables in public, as victims are often specifically targeted based on appearance, as well as on perceived vulnerability and/or lack of awareness.
- Short-term 'express' kidnapping poses a risk to business travellers. Foreign nationals should maintain a low profile while in the country. Longer-term international assignees should avoid establishing routines and vary the timings and routes of journeys.
- Avoid providing personal information to anyone outside of your trusted group; do not volunteer information to strangers. Refrain from posting personal and travel information on social media and networking sites.
- Virtual kidnapping is a crime where-in a target typically receives a call and is threatened and extorted for payment using deception and personal information. It is recommended to ignore calls and messages from unknown numbers if possible. In the event of receiving such a call, it is advised to hang up and contact the International SOS Assistance Centre.
- Physical theft of credit cards is a concern. Avoid withdrawing money from ATMs on the street and instead opt for those located in bank branches.
- Occasional politically motivated unrest is a possibility. Avoid all demonstrations as a precaution.
- Do not travel on foot after dark, or in unfamiliar or peripheral districts.
- Driving standards are variable. Do not self-drive, but pre-arrange hire of a private vehicle and experienced local driver through your hotel or host company. Keep windows up and doors locked at all times, and do not undertake road travel outside urban centres after dark.
- Protesters, community self-defence groups, and organised criminal groups may erect roadblocks to block passage into and out of towns and municipalities. Do not attempt to cross any roadblocks, as this may provoke a hostile reaction. Vigilantes and organised criminal groups have fired at vehicles that fail to stop at roadblocks.
- Transportation booked through the hotel or company or a rideshare app is suitable in most urban areas. Never hail a taxi from the street.
- In the event of a security emergency, it is advisable to reach out the Assistance Centre for support.
- Vigilantly monitor your financial statements and accounts during and after travel. If your financial information was compromised, it can take several weeks before fraudulent purchases are attempted.
- Certain business travellers, including employees of media and non-governmental organisations, may wish to take additional precautions to safeguard personal electronics and communications.
- Be aware of your surroundings and take precautions against unwanted attention. Drink spiking is a concern, especially in resort areas.

Active Alerts (4)

● Notice | Category

Veracruz state: Expect disruption over coming days due to protests linked to severe floods

15 October 2025 at 09:37

Location : Mexico

Category : Protest/Rally, Road disruption

Expect disruption across Veracruz state **over the coming days** due to protests related to severe flooding. Students from Veracruz University will gather to demand action from the authorities in response to severe flooding since 9 October (*see related alert*) and to denounce the lack of transparency regarding missing students. The demonstrations are likely to garner significant attendance and pass off peacefully, though ensuing scuffles between demonstrators and the police cannot be ruled out. Any related disturbances would pose incidental risks to bystanders.

Advice :

- Expect disruption during related demonstrations **over the coming weeks** and avoid them as a precaution. Leave an area at the first sign of unrest, or if you see protesters and/or the police gathering there.
- Expect heightened security measures near any related protests. Follow all official directives issued by the authorities.
- Expect residual flood-related disruption across the state.
- Monitor our Mexico alerts for updates.

● Notice | Category

Expect disruption on 14 October during nationwide protests, blockades by farmers

14 October 2025 at 08:08

Location : Mexico

Category : Protest/Rally, Road disruption

Expect disruption **over the coming hours** during nationwide protests organised by farmers' unions. Several farmers' groups have announced highway blockades and demonstrations at key points, including airports and government buildings, across the country. Participants will start gathering from **09.00** (local time) to demand the authorities increase the prices of crops and remove them from a free trade agreement between Canada, Mexico and the US. Reconfirm the status of routes and transport before setting out and plan journeys accordingly.

Advice :

- Liaise with local contacts for information on any related protests in your area. Expect associated disruption and plan journeys accordingly.
- Reconfirm the status of routes before setting out and allow extra time to complete journeys. Do not attempt to cross any roadblocks erected by demonstrators, as this may elicit a hostile response.
- Expect a heightened security force presence around associated gatherings and follow all official directives.
- Monitor our Mexico alerts for updates.

● Advisory | Category

Jalisco, Michoacan states: Take account of disruption on Federal Highway 15D in coming hours following multi-vehicle accident

14 October 2025 at 03:20

Location : Mexico

Category : Road incident, Road disruption

Plan journeys accounting for disruption on [Federal Highway 15D](#) in the coming hours following a multi-vehicle accident in Ocotlan (Jalisco state). According to the authorities, at least 23 people were injured on 13 October after five vehicles, including a passenger bus, were involved in the accident. The incident occurred at the 265-mile (427km) mark on the highway, which connects Zapotlanejo (Jalisco) and Maravatio (Michoacan state). Traffic to Morelia (Michoacan) was completely blocked and the National Guard was deployed to implement road diversions. Traffic disruption is likely along the highway. Take alternative routes if possible and follow all official directives.

Advice :

- Plan journeys accounting for disruption on Federal Highway 15D in the coming hours.
- If travelling near the affected area, ensure routes are clear prior to setting out and allow extra time to complete journeys.
- Follow all directives issued by the authorities.
- Monitor our Mexico alerts for updates.

● Advisory | Category

Expect disruption amid heavy rain, flooding affecting several states; maintain flexible itineraries

13 October 2025 at 00:00

Location : Mexico

Category : Flood, Landslide, Storm, Electricity outage, Road disruption

Expect weather-related disruption and maintain flexible itineraries **in the coming days** in central, eastern, southern and

south-eastern states. The National Meteorological Service (SMN) has forecast heavy rain, thunderstorms and strong winds in Chiapas, Guerrero, Oaxaca, Puebla, Quintana Roo, Veracruz and Yucatan states **through 16 October**. Earlier on 9-10 October, flooding caused power outages and road closures, and displaced residents in several states. At least 64 deaths have been reported. Heavy rain may cause landslides and further power outages, as well as transport disruption at short notice. Exercise caution and follow official directives in affected areas.

Advice :

- Monitor the SMN [website](#) (in Spanish) and local media for up-to-date weather information and official warnings. Follow all official directives and be prepared to adjust itineraries at short notice.
 - Reconfirm the status of routes before setting out and allow additional time for travel. Avoid flooded or landslide-affected roads.
 - Do not attempt to cross floodwaters, which may be electrically charged due to fallen power lines. If caught in rising water, exit your vehicle and seek higher ground.
 - **We do not hold information on specific flights.** Contact the relevant airline and reconfirm schedules. In the event of cancellations, your travel agent will be able to assist with alternative arrangements.
 - Charge all communications devices and keep backup batteries in case of power outages.
 - Monitor our Mexico alerts for updates.
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Destination Guide for Mexico

Before You Travel

Visa Requirements

IMMIGRATION REQUIREMENTS AND PROCEDURES

British

Passport Required: Yes
Visa Required: No
Return Ticket Required: Yes

Australian

Passport Required: Yes
Visa Required: No
Return Ticket Required: Yes

Canadian

Passport Required: Yes
Visa Required: No
Return Ticket Required: Yes

USA

Passport Required: Yes
Visa Required: No
Return Ticket Required: Yes

EU

Passport Required: Yes
Visa Required: No
Return Ticket Required: Yes

Visas

Nationals of countries mentioned in the chart above do not require visas for stays of up to 180 days as tourists, in transit or for business. Additionally, all foreign nationals, regardless of their nationality, do not require a visa if they have a valid visa issued by any of the following countries: Canada, Japan, the UK, the US or any of the countries comprising the Schengen Area or if they have a valid permanent resident card from Canada, Japan, the UK, the US or any of the countries comprising the Schengen Area or Pacific Alliance. People of other nationalities are required to obtain visas prior to arrival in the country. Business travellers are required to present a letter from the host company or organisation. For more visa-related information, visit the official [website](#).

All foreign nationals, except those flying in and out of Cancun (CUN), Cozumel (CZM), Los Cabos (SJD), Puerto Vallarta (PVR), Mexico City (MEX) and those with stays that are less than 72 hours within border areas, are required to fill out a free tourist card, which is an entry immigration form (Forma Migratoria Multiple), at the port of entry ([in advance](#)) or [online](#), no more than 30 days before arrival. The card must be shown upon departure. If lost, this tourist card can be replaced. You may need to pay a fine depending on the immigration authorities. The tourist card is issued for a maximum of 180 days at the discretion of the passport control official. Applicants for tourist cards should have a valid passport, the address of their accommodation in Mexico and the arrival flight information.

Business travellers who plan to stay longer can apply for an extension of their tourist card or a temporary visa (FM3) after arriving in Mexico. It takes 24 hours to process the extension. Business travellers are advised to carry photocopies of their passports and other documentation at all times.

Procedures

Passport control at airports is normally swift and straightforward. Many (but by no means all) officials understand simple English. At customs, arriving business travellers must press a button on what looks like a traffic light. If the green light lights

up, you may proceed and if the red light lights up, you must have your bags checked by an official. Laptop computers should be declared as being an 'instrumento de trabajo' (equipment for work purposes). Passengers arriving on international flights, especially from Colombia, the Caribbean and Central America, may be searched for drugs. In Cancun, US Drug Enforcement Administration agents are present at all times, providing information to the Mexican police.

Entry/Exit Requirements

Entry/Exit requirements

Immigration may require foreign nationals to show evidence of funds to finance their stay and/or an onward or return ticket. Passports for certain nationals should be valid for at least six months after the date of entry; people should confirm this requirement with the nearest Mexican embassy/consulate prior to travel. Tourist cards must be kept during the entire length of stay, as they will have to be presented and stamped on leaving. Individuals are required to declare on arrival amounts equivalent to or more than US\$10,000, including traveller's cheques and money orders.

Cultural Tips

CULTURAL ISSUES AND ETIQUETTE

General Tips

- Conversations with Mexicans, as with most Latin Americans, take place at a much closer physical distance than Westerners may be accustomed to at home. Stepping back from your counterpart may be regarded as unfriendly.
 - Exercise situational awareness and prudence when discussing issues related to organised crime, especially in HIGH-risk locations of Mexico. Avoid engaging the topic on social media platforms.
 - Use caution when photographing airports, police or military locations, oil installations, harbours or bridges, as they are considered security-related areas.
 - There are some legal restrictions relevant to LGBTQ+ individuals but these are not enforced or adhered to in the legal system. Societal attitudes towards the LGBTQ+ community are sometimes intolerant but violence is only occasionally directed towards its members.
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Getting There

METHOD OF ARRIVAL

More than 20 Mexican cities have international airports, though the principal point of entry is Benito Juárez International Airport ([MEX](#)) in the capital Mexico City. Other international airports include Miguel Hidalgo y Costilla Guadalajara Airport ([GDL](#)) in Guadalajara (Jalisco state), Mariano Escobedo Airport ([MTY](#)) in Monterrey (Nuevo León state), Tijuana Airport ([TIJ](#)) in Baja California state, Cancun Airport ([CUN](#)) in Quintana Roo state, and Los Cabos Airport (SJD), which serves both San Jose del Cabo and Cabo San Lucas in Baja California Sur state. Flights can be disrupted during the hurricane season between May and November. Flooding and mudslides are common during this period and may affect access routes to the airport.

International airports satisfy only minimum security standards. Business travellers do not face any significant security risks, though opportunistic crime, such as pickpocketing and bag-snatching, is common in and around airports. Foreign nationals should be on guard and keep luggage in sight at all times, especially at Benito Juárez airport, where the terminal can get crowded. It is also advisable to exercise caution when using banking and currency-exchange facilities within airport premises due to the possibility of being watched and followed by criminals.

Airlines have variable security standards. You may wish to consult the European Commission's [website](#) for a list of airlines banned within the EU and the US Federal Aviation Administration's [website](#) for a database of aviation accidents and statistics.

By land

Road travel is possible from the US, Guatemala and Belize; however, business travellers should be aware that there are significant crime risks in US and north-east Guatemala border areas and are advised to take necessary mitigating measures. Foreign nationals should check with a Mexican consulate for rules on taking a vehicle inside Mexico, as these may change

periodically. Business travellers should also ensure that their vehicle is in good condition and has sufficient fuel to reach the nearest urban centre, as there are not always petrol stations or mechanics at border crossings. A temporary vehicle import permit is required to take a vehicle beyond Baja California, the city of Guaymas (Sonora state) and the frontier zone of 10-20 miles (20-30km) along the rest of the US border and 40 miles (70km) from the Belizean and Guatemalan borders.

Procedures

Passport control at airports is normally swift and straightforward. Many (but by no means all) officials understand simple English. At customs, arriving business travellers must press a button on what looks like a traffic light. If the green light lights up, you may proceed and if the red light lights up, you must have your bags checked by an official. Laptop computers should be declared as being an 'instrumento de trabajo' (equipment for work purposes).

Passengers arriving on international flights, especially from Colombia, the Caribbean and Central America, may be searched for drugs. In Cancun, US Drug Enforcement Administration agents are present at all times, providing information to the Mexican police.

Getting Around

BY AIR

Major urban and industrial centres have international and domestic airports. Internal flights have become increasingly affordable due to the introduction of several low-cost carriers. The risks of overland travel and the long distances between urban areas means that air travel is often the quickest and safest option. Airport security standards are not high, except when anti-narcotics operations are in progress. Privately chartered aircraft should clear itineraries in advance with the appropriate authorities to limit the possibility of being intercepted by anti-narcotics or border patrols. AeroMéxico, the national carrier, operates flights between all major cities. Other major airlines in Mexico include Volaris, Interjet, TAR Aerolines and VivaAerobus.

Passengers arriving at night to Benito Juárez International Airport (MEX) in Mexico City should take precautions, as taxis have been targeted on the highway connecting the airport with the city.

BY ROAD

Main roads and highways, especially 'cuota' (toll) roads, are in good condition, though drivers should be alert to potholes. Traffic drives on the right side of the road and driving practices are poor; traffic and road regulations are frequently violated. In rural areas, livestock and heavy pedestrian movement on roads, as well as insufficient street lighting and signage, make driving conditions hazardous. Business travellers should not self-drive and should pre-arrange the hire of a private vehicle and experienced local driver through their hotel or host company; they should not undertake road travel outside urban centres after dark. If self-driving, foreign nationals should ensure appropriate security preparations are made, the vehicle is properly equipped and journeys are undertaken during daylight hours whenever possible. Most of the large international car-hire companies operate in major cities and tourist centres across Mexico. A US driver's licence is applicable.

Business travellers are reminded of crime risks such as robbery, carjacking and kidnapping on the roads. Car hold-ups occasionally occur in urban areas, particularly at traffic lights or in slow-moving traffic; foreign nationals are advised to always keep doors locked and car windows rolled up. Car theft is also common and motorists should use guarded car parks, rather than parking on the street.

Highway crime is a serious concern across the country both on toll and non-toll roads; physical - and sometimes sexual - assault has also been reported during some robberies. Thieves regularly attempt to stop cars at bogus police roadblocks or threaten drivers to make them leave their vehicles. A common tactic is to con a driver into stopping by the side of the road by indicating that there is something wrong with their car; another is the use of a vehicle with fake police lights on top to force a car to stop.

Criminals also use hijacked vehicles to set up roadblocks (narcobloqueos) to prevent the security forces from reaching the scene of an ongoing crime, potentially disrupting road journeys and increasing the risk to business travellers. Such blockades occur frequently throughout HIGH-risk regions, especially in the context of ongoing security operations or clashes between rival criminal groups. Travel to areas of heightened risk should be limited to business in daylight hours only. If an armed robbery takes place, business travellers should not attempt to resist. In an effort to combat organised criminal groups, federal police and military personnel have been deployed throughout the country. As such, foreign nationals may face delays due to government checkpoints on roads and highways.

Motorists should ensure that they have adequate, preferably Mexican, insurance cover to avoid severe penalties in the event of an accident. US liability coverage does not apply on Mexican territory; travellers should secure the minimum coverage before crossing the border from the US. If the driver is found to be under the influence of alcohol or drugs at the time of an accident, or without a valid driver's licence, the vehicle insurance is considered invalid.

BY TAXI

Taxis are a suitable means of transport in most urban areas. However, business travellers are advised against hailing them on the street. Business travellers should arrange for transport through their hotel or company. Car-share services such as Uber are also a suitable means of transport for business travellers. The cashless transaction with the driver and the ability to see driver and car details prior to departure add layers of security to the ride, which should be verified by the foreign nationals prior to entering the vehicle.

Extra caution should be exercised at night, as informal taxis disguised as official taxis have targeted riders for express kidnappings outside bars and clubs in upscale neighbourhoods.

BY TRAIN

The passenger rail system is largely defunct, except for a handful of tourist services, such as the Tequila Express from Guadalajara and the Copper Canyon train, also called as [El Chepe](#), in Chihuahua.

BY OTHER MEANS

Business travellers should avoid buses because they are poorly maintained, overcrowded, and potentially dangerous due to the risk posed by petty crime and armed robberies. If travelling by bus, choose bus companies that offer first-class service; avoid road travel for long distances. In resort locations such as Cozumel (Quintana Roo state), ferries operate between tourist destinations. These ferries are generally safe; however, caution should be exercised due to the high concentration of tourists.

Business Women

BUSINESSWOMEN

Violence against women is a major concern in urban and rural Mexico. Sexual harassment is widespread and can affect businesswomen of all profiles. Other forms of gendered violence are more likely to affect local workforce, though foreign nationals should exercise precautions due to their prevalence.

The risk of assault affects independent, low-budget tourists more than business travellers or those travelling as part of an organised tour. Recent protests and a national women's strike have tried to call attention to the issue of violence against women following a surge in femicides in the country in 2019-20.

The risk is greatest in isolated rural areas countrywide, where a lacking or corrupt security force presence means that criminals can often act with impunity. Several attacks in recent years have taken place on quiet or deserted beaches, even at upscale resorts. The risk while travelling in these areas can be reduced by keeping to main roads in private cars or premier class buses and avoiding walking alone after dark.

The risks posed by gendered violence tend to increase in HIGH-risk areas. Organised criminal groups have been known to abduct women for human trafficking. Female business travellers should be extremely vigilant and should only move about accompanied in HIGH-risk areas, especially in border cities such as Ciudad Juarez (Chihuahua state), Nuevo Laredo, Matamoros, Reynosa (all Tamaulipas state), and Tijuana (Baja California state).

Working Week

WORKING WEEK

- Working week: Monday- Friday
- Office hours: 09.00-20.00; 14.00-16.00 lunch break.
- Banking hours: 09.00-17.00 Monday to Friday and until 13.00 on Saturdays.

Language & Money

LANGUAGE

Spanish is the national language, but English is widely used in business circles. Hotel staff are likely to speak English, particularly in the US border region, large cities and popular tourist resorts. Indigenous languages are also used, but primarily in rural areas of southern states such as Chiapas, Guerrero and Oaxaca and in the Yucatan peninsula.

MONEY

The official currency is the Mexican peso (MXN). Workforce should try to carry cash in denominations no larger than the 500 MXN note, as shops and restaurants will often refuse to accept larger notes; acquiring small change can be difficult. Smaller notes are usually required for taxis and minor purchases.

Although some large transactions (such as property prices or major contracts) may be priced in US dollars, most commercial establishments only accept pesos. Traveller's cheques in US dollars, pounds or euros are accepted by most banks. ATMs are widely available and many accept North American and European cards, while most business-class shops and restaurants are happy to accept internationally recognised credit cards such as Visa, MasterCard and American Express. A surcharge may be levied if paying by credit card. Theft and credit/debit card skimming is a concern. People should regularly check their credit card statements. Workforce should only use ATMs located inside banks and other commercial establishments for security reasons.

Tipping

TIPPING

Tipping is expected if a service charge has not already been added to the bill. The US custom of tipping 15-20% is practised at international resorts, including those in Acapulco, Cancun, Los Cabos, Puerto Vallarta and Tulum.

Geography & Weather

CLIMATE

Climate overview

- The climate varies according to region, latitude and altitude.
- Coastal regions are hot and humid throughout the year.
- In tropical areas in the south, there are significant levels of rainfall between June and September.
- Monitor the [National Meteorological Service](#) website for weather updates.

Cyclonic activity

- Mexico is prone to hurricanes on both its Pacific and Atlantic coasts between May and November, peaking in August and September.
- Flash floods and mudslides are common during the hurricane season, especially in mountainous, coastal and low-lying areas.
- Such floods can result in damage to infrastructure, displacement of populations, casualties and travel disruption.
- Heavy rain in October 2025 caused severe flooding and landslides in central and south-eastern Mexico, damaging homes and roads, and killing at least 29 people.

Earthquakes

- Mexico lies in a seismically active zone.
- Significant earthquakes have occurred throughout the country, including in the Federal District and states bordering the Pacific Ocean.
- In September 2022, a -magnitude 7.6 earthquake struck western Mexico, resulting in widespread infrastructural damage and casualties.
- The Mexican Seismic Alert System (SASMEX) is a network of seismic monitors concentrated in states bordering the Pacific Ocean.
- SASMEX issues early warning alerts for earthquakes. It can provide up to 60 seconds of warning for selected cities (Acapulco, Chilpancingo, Colima, Guadalajara, Mexico City, Morelia, Oaxaca, Puebla and Toluca).
- Monitor the [Seismic Instrumentation and Registration Centre](#) website for earthquake alerts.

Volcanic activity

- There are several active volcanoes in Mexico.

- Two of the most notable volcanoes are Popocatepetl (Mexico, Morelos, Puebla states) and Volcan de Colima (Colima, Jalisco states).
- Ash clouds due to increased activity at the Popocatepetl volcano in January-March 2024 caused flight disruption.
- Monitor the [National Centre for the Prevention of Disasters](https://www.nceps.gov/) website for alerts on volcanic activity.

GEOGRAPHY

Mexico is bordered by the US to the north, Belize and Guatemala to the south, the Caribbean Sea and Gulf of America/Mexico to the east and the Pacific Ocean to the west. The heavily monitored border with the US is 1,951 miles (3,141km) in length. The rugged eastern and western Sierra Madre Mountains play an important role in defining much of the topography of the interior. The country is administratively divided into 32 states, including the capital Mexico City.

International Dialing & Power

DIALLING CODES

Country Code : 52

IDD Prefix (International Direct Dialling) : 00

NDD Prefix (National Direct Dialling) : 01

COMMUNICATIONS

The mobile network coverage is adequate. Mobile providers usually offer roaming services for the country. The airmail postal service is adequate, but slow for business purposes. Surface mail takes between one and three weeks to reach the US and between three and six weeks to reach Europe. A faster option is to use courier services: DHL, UPS and Federal Express have offices in most cities.

Information Security

The country's growing economy and relatively lacking cybersecurity infrastructure have made it an attractive target for criminals. Banks and financial institutions are most commonly targeted, but not exclusively.

Business travellers are most susceptible to lower-level schemes such as 'card skimming' through point-of-sale malware. ATMs are at times modified to steal information from the inserted bank card. Virtual extortion also remains a significant concern. Cyber espionage is mostly carried out by state actors seeking to access government information. However, corporate espionage is also a rising concern.

Advice

Before travel

- Only bring devices that you require for travel. Ensure any such device is updated with the latest software versions and relevant security patches are installed.
- Make a pre-travel backup of any information and store it at home.
- Consult with your organisation's IT and security departments for any company-specific requirements and procedures.

During travel

- Remain vigilant and observe for any obvious signs of tampering when using point-of-sale systems that are external or unmonitored such as at a fuel station or street-facing ATM.
- Avoid using public Wi-Fi networks at airports or transport hubs. These networks are always insecure and, in some instances, created and controlled by cybercriminal groups. Instead, a virtual private network (VPN) service may be used to increase mobile security.
- Commercial 'charging stations' at airports can be used to extract data from your device or to upload malware to it. Avoid such public stations and use your personal charging equipment.

Upon return

- Consider changing account, device and administrator passwords upon returning home, especially if you have reason to believe that your device was tampered with or exposed during travel.
- Vigilantly monitor your financial statements and accounts during and after travel. If your financial information was compromised, it can take several weeks before fraudulent purchases are attempted.

ELECTRICITY



Calendar

Holidays & Security Dates

2025

12 Dec Our Lady of Guadalupe
Governments and banks only.

2026

01 Jan New Year's Day

In many countries, if this holiday falls on a Saturday or Sunday, a public holiday is declared for the following Monday.

05 Feb Constitution Day

If this holiday falls on a Saturday or Sunday, a public holiday is declared for the following Monday.

21 Mar Birth anniversary of Benito Pablo Juarez

A federal holiday to commemorate the birthday of deceased President Benito Pablo Juarez, celebrated for resisting foreign interventions. The day off may not fall on his birthday every year.

05 May Cinco de Mayo

Government and banks only nationwide; everything in Puebla state.

10 May Mothers Day

Unofficial, though some businesses may close for half the day.

16 Sep Independence Day

Destination Guide for Mexico

Medical Overview

Medical Care

Variable

Standard of Health Care

Let International SOS assist you.

International SOS will assist you to find appropriate emergency, inpatient or outpatient care, will provide language assistance, may be able to pay your medical expenses and will assist with evacuation when required.

Inpatient care

In the larger cities, selected private hospitals provide a high level of care. Many doctors and nurses have trained at centres of medical excellence and speak English as well as Spanish.

Public hospitals and facilities are not recommended, they may have shortages of medication and equipment and long waiting times.

Medical Contact

Emergency Numbers, hospital and clinic contact information

EMERGENCY NUMBERS

Fire service, police : 911

Hospitals & Clinics

Hospital Angeles del Carmen

Calle Tarascos 3435 Fraccionamiento Monraz
52 3338130042
gestionseguroshac1@saludangeles.mx, gestionseguroshac2@saludangeles.mx

Hospital Puerta de Hierro Andares

Avenida Empresarios 150 Colonia Puerta de Hierro
52 3338482100
contacto@cmpdh.mx

Hospital San Javier

Avenida Pablo Casals No. 640 Colonia Prados Providencia
52 3336690222
Oscar.perez@hospitalsanjavier.com

Centro Medico ABC - Observatorio

Calle Sur 136 No.116 Colonia Las Americas, Alvaro Obregon
52 5552308000
mesadeayudaobs@abchospital.com, cmbarradasp@abchospital.com

Centro Medico ABC - Santa Fe

Av. Carlos Graef Fernandez 154 Colonia Santa Fe, Cuajimalpa
52 5511031600

mesadeayudasfe@abchospital.com

Hospital Angeles Pedregal

Camino a Santa Teresa 1055-S Colonia Los Heroes de Padierna
52 5554495500
admision.cspd@saludangeles.mx

Hospital Espanol

Ejercito Nacional 613 Colonia Granada
52 5552559600
contacto@hespanol.com

Star Medica Roma

San Luis de Potosi No 143, Centro Urbano Pdte. Juárez Col Roma Nte., Cuauhtémoc
52 5510844723, 52 5510844743, 52 5510844747
soporte.digital@starmedica.com, jadmision.cto@starmedica.com, colvera.cto@starmedica.com

Hospital Alta Especialidad - Christus Muguerza

Avenida Miguel Hildago y Costilla No.2525 Colonia Obispado
52 8183993400, 52 8183993477
tu_amigo_muguerza@christusmuguerza.com.mx

Hospital Angeles Valle Oriente

180 Avenida Frida Khalo San Pedro Valle Oriente.
52 8183687777
sadaky.gonzalez@saludangeles.com

Hospital Conchita Christus Muguerza

15 de Mayo 1822 Maria Luisa, Nuevo Obispado
52 8181228104, 52 8181228122, 52 8183993400
tu_amigo_muguerza@christusmuguerza.com.mx

Hospital Zambrano Hellion-Tec Salud

Avenida Batallon de San Patricio 112 Colonia Real de San Agustin
52 8188880000, 52 8188880911
atencion.seguros@servicios.tecsalud.mx

Vaccinations

Routine and additional

Hepatitis A

Recommended for all travellers and international assignees, especially groups at higher risk including:

- long-term and frequent visitors.
- adventurous travellers who travel to more remote locations or stay in areas with poor sanitation.
- gay, bisexual, and other men who have sex with men (see [US CDC](https://www.cdc.gov)).
- people who use illicit drugs.
- those with liver disease.

Hepatitis A is a viral disease that causes liver inflammation. The virus is present in the faeces of an infected person. It spreads through contaminated food and water and is common in areas with poor sanitation. Person-to-person spread also occurs,

when the virus is inadvertently transferred into the mouth, including during sexual activity. People at higher risk of infection include men who have sex with men, illicit drug users and people with liver disease.

Not everyone gets symptoms. If symptoms do occur, they begin two to four weeks or more after infection and can last for weeks or months. Symptoms include fever, fatigue, loss of appetite, diarrhoea, nausea/vomiting, abdominal pain/discomfort, jaundice (yellow colour of the skin and eyes), dark urine, clay-coloured stool, joint pain and itching. Many infected people suffer only a mild illness. Most cases recover fully after four or more weeks. However, for some, the disease can be severe, and occasionally is fatal. There is no specific treatment and cases are managed through supportive therapy. Prevention is through vaccination, attention to hygiene, and access to safe food and water.

[Watch the Hepatitis Video Podcast](#) (Vimeo)

[View Viral Hepatitis Infographic Poster](#) (PDF)

The Disease

Hepatitis is a general term that means inflammation of the liver. Medications, poisons, alcohol and infections can all cause hepatitis.

Hepatitis A is inflammation of the liver caused by a virus. The virus is highly contagious. People are mostly infected through eating or drinking contaminated food or water, or through direct contact with an infected person. Usually people make a full recovery, however occasionally the disease can be severe or fatal. There is an effective vaccine available.

Transmission

The illness is transmitted via the "faecal-oral route". The virus is present in the stool of an infected person. Others are infected when they consume food / drink contaminated with the virus. This is more common in areas with poor sanitation systems and limited access to clean water.

It is also possible to get the disease via direct contact with an infected person's faecal matter, for example through incompletely washed hands, sexual contact or through shared illicit drugs.

Symptoms

Not everyone gets symptoms. Most childhood infections will be asymptomatic or mild. Most adults will develop symptoms, and severity increases with age.

If symptoms do occur, they begin two to four or more weeks after infection and can last for weeks or months. They include any or all of the following:

- fever
- fatigue
- loss of appetite
- diarrhoea
- nausea/vomiting
- abdominal pain/discomfort
- jaundice (yellowing of the skin and eyes)
- dark urine, clay-coloured stool
- joint pain
- itching

Most people make a full recovery. About 10 to 15% of symptomatic persons with hepatitis A may experience relapse or prolonged illness up to six months. Sometimes the disease is severe and can be fatal (less than 1% of all cases), particularly in older people, and those with other underlying liver disease (such as infection with hepatitis B or C). It is thought to be due to the immune mechanisms rather than infection levels.

Diagnosis

Blood tests are required to confirm the diagnosis.

Treatment

There is no specific medication to treat hepatitis A. Medications to relieve symptoms should only be used under medical advice as they may contribute to damage of the liver.

Prevention

Prevention is through **hygiene**, careful selection of **food and water**, and **vaccination**.

Good hygiene, and choosing safe food and water are important, especially in areas where hepatitis A is common:

- Maintain a high level of personal hygiene, including during sexual activity.
- Do not drink tap water. Choose boiled or bottled water from reputable sources, water that has been treated with chlorine or iodine, or carbonated beverages.
- Avoid ice, as it may have been made with unsafe water.

- Ask locally which restaurants and hotels serve safe food.
- Select food that has been thoroughly cooked while fresh and served very hot.
- Do not eat raw shellfish.

Vaccination is effective, widely available and generally recommended for any traveller who has not already had the vaccine (or the disease). Two doses, given six months apart, are required for lifelong immunity. All travellers should consider it, particularly:

- If travelling to areas with high rates of hepatitis A.
- When living conditions are crowded or have poor sanitation.
- Men who have sex with men.
- Illicit drug users.
- People with liver disease.

Postexposure prophylaxis: After exposure, people who are not immune may be recommended Hepatitis A vaccination or immune globulin (antibodies) as soon as possible (within two weeks) to prevent infection.

Risk to travellers

Hepatitis A is common in areas with limited access to sanitation. People who live with an infected person, men who have sex with men, illicit drug users and people with liver disease are at higher risk in any area.

US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) [Hepatitis A Information](#)

European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) [Factsheet about hepatitis A](#)

Hepatitis B

Recommended for most travellers and international assignees, especially:

- For long-term or frequent visitors, and health-care workers.
- For adventurous travellers who travel to more remote locations.
- If possibility of new sexual partner, needle sharing, acupuncture, dental work, body piercing or tattooing during visit.

Many travel health professionals recommend hepatitis B vaccination for all travellers, regardless of destination.

The Disease

The hepatitis B virus, like HIV, is transmitted through contact with blood, blood products or body fluids. Modes of transmission include:

- Unprotected sexual intercourse
- Infected blood transfusions
- Needle sharing by IV drug users
- Use of unsterilized needles, syringes or equipment
- From mother to child during childbirth

Symptoms develop between 45 and 160 days after infection when the virus invades the liver causing fever, abdominal pain, nausea and loss of appetite. Jaundice (yellowing of the skin and eyes) is a common feature and the urine may become dark. There is no specific treatment and recovery usually takes about four weeks. Many individuals may have no symptoms but can still be infectious to others.

Approximately 1 in 10 of those infected do not recover fully and suffer ongoing liver damage called chronic hepatitis B - this can eventually cause liver cirrhosis and/or cancer. The very young and the elderly are more likely to develop a chronic infection.

Vaccination

In many countries, hepatitis B is included in the routine childhood immunizations and need not be repeated. For unvaccinated travelers:

Routine schedule

- Individual hepatitis B vaccination requires a series of three injections given on days zero, 30 and after 6-12 months.
- A combined vaccine for hepatitis A and B is available in many countries. It also requires a series of three injections given on days zero, 30 and after six months.

Accelerated schedule

Can be used for travelers who will depart before the first two doses of the routine schedule can be given:

- Use an *individual* hepatitis B vaccine
- Doses on days 0, 7 and 21
- Fourth dose required after 6 months

Accelerated combined hepatitis A and B vaccine

- Doses on days 0, 7 and 21
- Fourth dose of hepatitis B alone or the combined vaccine required after 12 months

[Watch the Hepatitis Video Podcast](#) (Vimeo)

[View Viral Hepatitis Infographic Poster](#) (PDF)

The Disease

Hepatitis B is a viral disease affecting the liver. It is transmitted through contact with blood, blood products or body fluids of an infected person. It can cause a mild illness but occasionally can develop into a chronic illness.

Transmission

The hepatitis B virus, like HIV, is transmitted through contact with blood, blood products or body fluids (e.g. semen, saliva) on broken skin. Modes of transmission include:

- Unprotected sexual intercourse with an infected partner
- Infected blood transfusions
- Needle sharing by IV drug users
- Use of unsterilized needles, syringes or equipment
- From mother to child during childbirth
- Contact with wounds of an infected person

The virus remains viable outside the body on any surface for about seven days and can lead to infection. Blood spills including dried blood can be infectious.

Symptoms

Symptoms develop between 30 and 180 days after exposure to infection. Hepatitis B can either be acute (short term illness) or chronic (long term illness). Most people will not develop symptoms during the acute phase. Others experience fever, pain in muscles and joints, abdominal, nausea and loss of appetite. Jaundice (yellowing of the skin and eyes) is a common feature and the urine may become dark. Recovery may take several weeks.

Risk of chronic illness is related to age. Babies who get infected from their mothers or those that get infected before five years of age are very likely to develop chronic infection. Less than 5% of adults and about 90% of children may develop chronic infection. In chronic illness, virus continues to remain in the body although people do not have symptoms. Many individuals may appear healthy but can spread the infection to others. Life threatening conditions such as liver cirrhosis and/or cancer may develop.

Diagnosis

The disease can be confirmed by blood tests.

Treatment

There is no specific cure for the disease. Treatment is mainly supportive, consisting of rest, adequate nutrition and medications to reduce discomfort.

Prevention

Avoid direct contact with body fluids.

Vaccine: This can prevent the illness and its serious outcomes such as cirrhosis and cancer. In many countries, hepatitis B vaccination is included in the routine childhood immunizations.

Risk to Travellers

Most travellers are at low risk unless they have contact with the infected blood or body fluids.

[CDC Hepatitis B information](#)

Measles

- Recommended for all travellers and international assignees.
- All travellers should be up to date with their measles vaccination (schedule differs by country). Vaccination for adults is available as MMR (measles, mumps and rubella), two doses given at least four weeks apart are required.

Some individuals [cannot be vaccinated](#) due to certain health conditions.

Measles is a highly contagious viral disease that can have serious complications.

Transmission

Measles spreads very easily when an infected person talks, coughs, or sneezes, releasing droplets into the air. If a healthy person breathes in these droplets, they can get sick. The virus can stay in the air and infect people for up to 2 hours after the infected person has left. It can also land on objects and surfaces, where it can live for several hours. If you touch these surfaces and then touch your face, you can get infected.

A person with measles is infectious from four days before the appearance of the rash until four days after it has appeared. After being exposed to the virus, approximately 90% of people who are not immune will become infected.

Symptoms

Measles symptoms usually start 7-14 days after being exposed to the virus. Early signs include a high fever, cough, runny nose, and red, watery eyes. Small white spots, known as Koplik's spots, may appear inside the mouth. A few days later, a red, blotchy rash starts on the face and spreads to the rest of the body.

Measles can lead to serious complications, especially in young children, adults over 20, pregnant women, and people with weakened immune systems. Common complications include ear infections and diarrhea. More severe complications can be pneumonia, which is a lung infection, and encephalitis, which is swelling of the brain. These severe complications can sometimes be fatal.

Pregnant women who contract measles have an increased chance of miscarriage and pre-term delivery. Their babies may also experience low birth weights and birth defects.

Diagnosis

This illness is usually diagnosed clinically. If necessary, a lab test can confirm measles.

Treatment

There is no particular treatment for measles. Symptoms can be managed with over-the-counter preparations, good nutrition and adequate fluid intake. Antibiotics are required if there are bacterial complications (such as pneumonia, ear infection). Sick people should be isolated from non-immune people, and should not go out in public until at least four days after their rash appears.

Prevention

Measles can be effectively prevented by vaccination, which many countries routinely administer during childhood. The MMR (measles, mumps, and rubella) vaccine is highly effective and safe, providing lifelong immunity for most people after two doses. Vaccination not only protects individuals but also helps prevent the spread of the virus within communities.

People who are not immune and are at higher risk for complications (such as pregnant women, unvaccinated infants and people with weakened immune systems) may be given a dose of antibodies if exposed to the virus.

In addition to vaccination, good hygiene practices, such as regular handwashing and avoiding close contact with infected individuals, can help reduce the risk of transmission.

Risk to Travellers

Measles occurs throughout the world. Outbreaks are common in areas where there is low vaccination coverage. Measles is highly contagious and can spread quickly in places where people gather, such as airports and tourist destinations. Anyone who has not been immunised, or has not previously had measles, is at risk of infection.

- International SOS article on [measles, mumps and rubella vaccination](#)
- [CDC Measles Information](#)
- See routine childhood vaccination schedules: [Australia](#), [Canada](#), [Europe](#), [USA](#), [UK](#)

Typhoid fever

Recommended for all travellers and international assignees.

Typhoid fever is a serious infection caused by *Salmonella typhi* bacteria. People are infected through ingesting contaminated food or water. Choosing safe food and water and vaccination reduces the risk of developing the disease.

Symptoms usually begin one to three weeks after exposure. Although typhoid fever is often called a diarrhoeal disease, some patients do not have diarrhoea. Persistent, high fever is typical. Other early symptoms are flu-like: body aches and pains, weakness, loss of appetite and a continuous dull headache. A rash with pink spots may appear on the chest and abdomen of some patients. In severe cases, perforation of the bowel can cause severe bleeding or infection in the abdomen, which can be fatal.

Typhoid is treated with antibiotics. However there is a growing problem of antibiotic resistance. "Extensively drug-resistant" (XDR) typhoid is present in some locations and does not respond to many of the antibiotics which are usually used against typhoid, making preventive measures even more important. Vaccination is recommended for people travelling to locations where typhoid is consistently present.

The Disease

Typhoid fever is a serious infection caused by *Salmonella Typhi* bacteria. It spreads either through intake of contaminated food or water or close contact with an infected person. Raw fruit and vegetables, and shellfish are often associated with typhoid.

Symptoms

The symptoms usually begin seven to 21 days after exposure. The typical feature of the disease is persistent high fevers. While typhoid fever is often called a diarrhoeal disease, not all patients have diarrhoea. Symptoms include high fever, body aches and pains, weakness, stomach ache, loss of appetite, cough and diarrhoea or constipation. Some people may develop a rash. If left untreated, symptoms worsen and life threatening complications may develop.

Some people can carry the bacteria without any symptoms ("carriers") and are a source of infection.

Diagnosis

Lab tests done on blood, stool and urine samples help diagnose the illness.

Treatment

Typhoid is treated with antibiotics. However there is a growing problem of antibiotic resistance. "Extensively drug-resistant" (XDR) typhoid is present in some locations and does not respond to many of the antibiotics which are usually used against typhoid, making preventive measures even more important.

Prevention

Typhoid is prevented through careful selection of safe food and water and vaccination. Maintaining hygiene measures and choosing safe food and water is important because typhoid vaccines do not provide complete protection.

- Maintain a high level of personal hygiene; wash hands frequently with soap and water.
- Drink only bottled or treated water or hot beverages.
- Select safe food. Meals should be thoroughly cooked and served hot. Avoid under-cooked or raw meat, fish or shellfish. Eat only fruit that you peel yourself.

Vaccination is recommended for people travelling to locations where typhoid is consistently present.

Primary vaccination

Primary vaccination and booster doses for typhoid are the same. They can be either:

- A single injection.
- A series of three or four oral capsules taken on alternate days (differs country-to-country).

Booster

- After injected typhoid vaccination (Vi), a booster may be recommended at 2-3 years.
- After oral typhoid vaccination (three capsules), a booster may be recommended at 3-5 years.
- After oral typhoid vaccination (four capsules), a booster may be recommended at 3-5 years.

Risk to Travellers

High-risk areas are those with poor hygiene and sanitation and limited access to safe water. The disease is common in destinations such as the Indian subcontinent and other developing countries in Asia, Africa and Central and South America.

[CDC Typhoid information](#)

Routine Vaccinations

COVID-19

All travelers should ensure they are up to date with COVID-19 vaccinations. Recommendations vary between countries.

Influenza

Annual vaccination is recommended. Vaccination is especially important for people at higher risk of severe disease, including:

- Young children
- Pregnant individuals
- People 65 years and older
- People with underlying health conditions

Measles-Mumps-Rubella

Vaccinations against measles, mumps, and rubella are routine in childhood, and are usually available as a combined vaccine "MMR".

Everyone should be immune to these diseases before travel.

There are outbreaks of measles in many locations.

If you are unsure of your immunity, consult your doctor well in advance of travel.

See routine childhood vaccination schedules: [Australia](#), [Canada](#), [Europe](#), [USA](#), [UK](#)

Polio

Vaccination against polio is routine in childhood in many countries. See routine childhood vaccination schedules: [Australia](#), [Canada](#), [Europe](#), [USA](#), [UK](#)

All adults should ensure they are immune to the disease before they travel abroad. If unsure of your immunity, consult your health professional. You may need a *primary vaccination* or a *booster*. Booster recommendations vary by country.

Tetanus-Diphtheria-Pertussis

Vaccinations against tetanus, diphtheria and pertussis are routine in childhood.

See routine childhood vaccination schedules: [Australia](#), [Canada](#), [Europe](#), [USA](#), [UK](#)

All adults should ensure they are immune to these diseases before they travel abroad. If unsure of your immunity, consult your health professional. You may need a *primary vaccination* or *booster*. Booster recommendations vary by country.

Varicella

Varicella (chickenpox) vaccinations are included in the routine childhood immunization schedule of some countries. See routine childhood vaccination schedules: [Australia](#), [Canada](#), [Europe](#), [USA](#), [UK](#)
All adults should ensure they are immune to varicella before they travel abroad. If unsure of your immunity, consult your health professional.

Health Threats

Known health threats for this country

Rabies

Rabies is a viral disease contracted when bitten or scratched by an infected (rabid) animal, often a dog. Once it enters the body, the virus travels along nerves and causes paralysis. As it reaches important organs like the spinal cord and the brain, it causes coma and death.

In countries where rabies is present in animals or bats, ALL animal / bat bites, scratches and licks to broken skin must be treated seriously. Rabies vaccination is very effective in preventing rabies, even after a bite/scratch by a rabid animal.

Rabies vaccination

Pre-exposure vaccination is often recommended for expatriates and long-term visitors to destinations where rabies is present. It's especially recommended if quality medical care may not be available after being bitten or scratched by an animal. Pre-exposure treatment can be especially useful for children, since they may not tell their parents that they have been bitten/scratched.

Pre-exposure vaccination makes it easier to treat a bite or scratch. That's important because some types of rabies treatment can be in short supply in many countries, even in cities.

If bitten, scratched or licked (on broken skin) by an animal:

- Immediately cleanse the wound with soap and water and a povidone-iodine solution if available.
- Seek medical advice from a qualified source or your assistance company.
- Notify local health authorities immediately. You may need *post-exposure vaccination*, even if you have had pre-exposure vaccination. (THIS CAN BE LIFE SAVING.)

American Trypanosomiasis (Chagas disease)

Also known as Chagas disease, American Trypanosomiasis is transmitted by a blood-sucking bug, the triatomine (also known as the "kissing bug"). An infected bug deposits faeces on the victim's skin, often at night. Infection occurs when the faeces or urine are rubbed into a bite, an open cut, the eyes or mouth. Chagas disease can also be transmitted in other ways, including through blood or organ donation from infected donors, and contaminated food and drinks.

The initial stages of the infection may go unnoticed or only be mild. Local swelling may appear at the site of infection, and some people get a characteristic purplish swelling around the lids of one eye. Other symptoms include fever, body aches and headaches, diarrhoea, vomiting, breathing difficulty and swollen lymph nodes. Chronic infections may involve the heart, gastrointestinal system or brain, and can be fatal. No vaccine is available. Treatment with anti-parasitic medicines is most effective soon after infection. Prevent infection by avoiding insect bites and choosing safe food and water. Choose well-constructed facilities to sleep indoors and use a bed net.

Chikungunya

Chikungunya is a viral disease transmitted through mosquito bites, not from person to person. Common symptoms include fever, joint pains and swelling, rash, muscle pain, nausea, headache, conjunctivitis ("pink eye"), and fatigue. Symptoms usually resolve within ten days, however, in some cases joint pain and fatigue may persist for months or years. Rarely the brain, eyes, heart, and kidneys can be affected and fatalities have been reported. People at higher risk for severe illness include newborns infected at the time of birth, the elderly and people with underlying health conditions. There is no specific medication to treat the disease. Symptoms are managed with rest and pain relief medications. Aspirin and non-steroidal anti-inflammatory medication (such as ibuprofen) should be avoided until dengue fever has been ruled out, and only used under medical supervision. Prevention is through preventing mosquito bites. Vaccines against chikungunya are available in several countries.

Dengue fever

Dengue, or "break-bone" fever, is a viral disease of the tropics and sub-tropics. It is transmitted by the *Aedes aegypti* and *Aedes albopictus* mosquitoes that bite during the daytime and are found in and around human habitation. Transmission from mother to child is possible during pregnancy or birth. Symptoms include high fever, severe headaches, joint and muscle pain,

nausea and vomiting. A rash often follows. The acute illness can last up to ten days, but complete recovery can take two to four weeks.

Occasionally, a potentially fatal form of dengue called severe dengue (previously known as dengue hemorrhagic fever or DHF) occurs. Severe dengue is more likely in infants and those who are pregnant, as well as for people who have been infected in the past and are infected again with a different strain of dengue. When a pregnant person is infected there is a risk of pre-term birth, low birth weight and foetal distress. About 2 to 3 out of 100 severe dengue cases are likely to be fatal. Prevention is through avoiding mosquito bites. Dengue vaccine is available in some countries. Authorities have different eligibility and recommendation for use.

Leishmaniasis

Leishmaniasis is a disease caused by a parasite that can infect humans, dogs, rodents and other small animals. It is transmitted by sandflies that bite mainly between dusk and dawn and can occur in both rural and urban environments. Sandflies breed quickly in unsanitary conditions, and the spread of the disease is exacerbated by war, chronic food shortages and urbanisation activities like deforestation and building of dams and irrigation systems, changes in temperature, heavy rainfall and population movement. The disease can manifest in one of the three forms, cutaneous (is the most common form and causes skin ulcers), mucocutaneous (is a rare form which affects the inner parts of the nose and mouth) or visceral (which is the more severe form and can lead to death). There is no vaccine or drug to prevent leishmaniasis.

Prevention

The only way to avoid leishmaniasis is to prevent sandfly bites.

- Minimise outdoor activities from dusk to dawn- this is when sand flies are most active.
- Use protective clothing and insect repellent.
- Consider using an insecticide-treated bed net with *fine mesh* if there are sandflies in your living quarters. The standard bed nets used to prevent malaria are not effective, as sandflies are about one-third the size of mosquitoes and can fly through the malaria nets.
- Note that sandflies are small and do not make noise while flying. This makes it difficult to determine whether they are in your environment. Their bites cause mild symptoms and might not be noticed.

Malaria

Malaria is transmitted by mosquitoes that usually bite from dusk to dawn. Symptoms can develop as early as seven days or as late as several months after exposure. Early malaria symptoms are flu-like and can include fever, sweats/chills, head and body aches, and generally feeling tired and unwell. People also sometimes feel nauseous and vomit or have diarrhoea. Untreated, malaria can cause serious complications like anaemia, seizures, mental confusion, kidney failure and coma. It can be fatal.

Follow the ABCDEs to minimise malarial risk:

A: Awareness - Be **Aware** of the risk, the symptoms and malaria prevention.

B: Bite Prevention - Avoid being **Bitten** by mosquitoes, especially between dusk and dawn.

C: Chemoprophylaxis - If prescribed for you, use **Chemoprophylaxis** (antimalarial medication) to prevent infection and if infected reduce the risk of severe malaria.

D: Diagnosis - Immediately seek **Diagnosis** and treatment if a fever develops one week or more after being in a malarial area (up to one year after departure).

E: Emergency - Carry an **Emergency** Standby Treatment (EST) kit if available and recommended (this is the kit which contains malaria treatment).

Zika virus

Zika is a viral disease, mostly transmitted to people by mosquito bites, but also from one person to another through sexual contact. Symptoms can be mild and include fever, rash, muscle and joint pains, red eyes (conjunctivitis). However, infection during pregnancy can cause severe complications, including miscarriage and permanent birth defects (congenital Zika syndrome). No specific treatment or vaccine is available. Prevent infection through mosquito bite avoidance. Prevent sexual transmission through condom use or abstinence.

Air Pollution

Poor air quality, also known as "haze", "smog" and "air pollution", can negatively impact one's health. Some groups are especially vulnerable to problems caused by polluted air. These include children, the elderly and anyone with underlying chronic health problems such as heart disease, emphysema, bronchitis or asthma.

The chemicals in polluted air can affect the lungs resulting in wheezing, coughing, shortness of breath and even pain. Polluted air can also irritate the eyes and nose, and may interfere with immune system function. Long-term exposure can result in reduced lung function, particularly in children. It can also lead to lung cancer.

Limiting exposure to polluted air is the best way to prevent health problems. When air quality is poor, it may be advisable to avoid outdoor physical activities. While indoors, keep doors and windows closed, and use an air conditioner on 'recirculate' if possible. If the air quality is frequently problematic, consider using an air cleaner. During particularly bad periods, you may want to wear a mask while outside. Ask your healthcare provider before using a mask, especially if you have underlying health conditions.

See the International SOS [Air Pollution website](#) - use your membership number to log in.

Altitude

Altitude illness is a potentially fatal condition that can affect people who normally live at a low altitude and travel to higher altitudes. It can occur from elevations of 1,500 meters onwards but is more common at elevations above 2,500 meters (8,000 feet).

People most at risk are those who have experienced altitude illness before, people who have heart or lung problems and people under the age of 50. There are three different types of altitude illness: Acute Mountain Sickness (AMS), High Altitude Cerebral Edema (HACE) and High Altitude Pulmonary Edema (HAPE). AMS is the most common and mild form of altitude illness. HACE and HAPE are more severe. HACE is a medical emergency and if not treated and managed quickly, can result in coma and death. Management of altitude illnesses involves immediate descent and oxygen treatment. Most people who are affected, even those who develop HACE or HAPE, recover completely if moved to a lower elevation. There are medicines that can be administered by trained medical professionals.

Anyone travelling to high altitudes, especially higher than 2,500 meters, should be aware of and recognise the symptoms of altitude illness. See your travel health professional before departure, for individual advice on preventive measures, especially if you have ever suffered altitude sickness in the past, or if you have an underlying medical condition.

Cutaneous Larva Migrans

Cutaneous Larva Migrans (CLM) is a skin infection caused by parasites known as hookworms. Animals such as dogs and cats host these parasites and shed the parasite eggs in their faeces. The eggs then hatch into larvae. Transmission occurs through direct skin contact with contaminated sand or soil. The larva penetrates the outermost layers of the skin. A pricking or itching sensation may be experienced when the larva penetrates the skin. Within a few hours, a rash can develop at the entry point. As the larva moves, creeping tracks or snake-like reddish tracks will develop. Severe itching and mild swelling may also occur. CLM usually resolves itself without any treatment. Some anti-parasitic medications may be used to shorten the duration of infection.

There is no medication to prevent the infection. Avoid walking barefoot at the beach and avoid direct skin contact with infected sand or soil. Use a clean towel or mat to sit or lie on the sand.

Volcano

There are several types of volcanic eruptions and some pose a major threat to health. One such eruption is volcanic ash fall. Ash is made of fine particles of rock and minerals and is gritty and abrasive. It can carry for many kilometres through the air. Approaching ash clouds resemble ordinary weather clouds, and are sometimes accompanied by lightning or thunder. They bring a sulfur smell into the air.

When the ash finally falls, it settles in a dust-like covering. The "dust", however, is hard and abrasive. It does not dissolve in water, and it conducts electricity. It becomes more conductive when wet. Heavy ash falls can cause roofs to collapse and can lead to high levels of respirable ash in the air people breathe.

Most commonly, people get a runny nose and sore throat, sometimes with a dry cough. Because the ash is gritty, it can cause skin and eye irritation. People should minimize exposure to ash, those with chronic bronchitis, emphysema, asthma and other respiratory conditions should be especially vigilant since their symptoms can worsen.

Hepatitis A

Hepatitis A is a viral disease that causes liver inflammation. The virus is present in the faeces of an infected person. It spreads through contaminated food and water and is common in areas with poor sanitation. Person-to-person spread also occurs, when the virus is inadvertently transferred into the mouth, including during sexual activity. People at higher risk of infection include men who have sex with men, illicit drug users and people with liver disease.

Not everyone gets symptoms. If symptoms do occur, they begin two to four weeks or more after infection and can last for weeks or months. Symptoms include fever, fatigue, loss of appetite, diarrhoea, nausea/vomiting, abdominal pain/discomfort, jaundice (yellow colour of the skin and eyes), dark urine, clay-coloured stool, joint pain and itching. Many infected people suffer only a mild illness. Most cases recover fully after four or more weeks. However, for some, the disease can be severe, and occasionally is fatal. There is no specific treatment and cases are managed through supportive therapy.

Prevention is through vaccination, attention to hygiene, and access to safe food and water.

Travellers diarrhoea

Travellers' diarrhoea is the most common travel-related illness. It usually occurs within the first week away from home. It is spread through contaminated food and water.

Prevention is through choosing safe food and water, and paying attention to hygiene. Select food that is thoroughly cooked while fresh and served hot. Avoid undercooked or raw meat, fish or shellfish. Avoid salad and raw vegetables unless you can wash them with clean (treated) water and you peel them yourself.

Unless you are certain that the tap water is drinkable - choose bottled water and beverages, avoid ice.

Typhoid fever

Typhoid fever is a serious infection caused by *Salmonella typhi* bacteria. People are infected through ingesting contaminated food or water. Choosing safe food and water and vaccination reduces the risk of developing the disease.

Symptoms usually begin one to three weeks after exposure. Although typhoid fever is often called a diarrhoeal disease, some patients do not have diarrhoea. Persistent, high fever is typical. Other early symptoms are flu-like: body aches and pains, weakness, loss of appetite and a continuous dull headache. A rash with pink spots may appear on the chest and abdomen of some patients. In severe cases, perforation of the bowel can cause severe bleeding or infection in the abdomen, which can be fatal.

Typhoid is treated with antibiotics. However there is a growing problem of antibiotic resistance. "Extensively drug-resistant" (XDR) typhoid is present in some locations and does not respond to many of the antibiotics which are usually used against typhoid, making preventive measures even more important. Vaccination is recommended for people travelling to locations where typhoid is consistently present.

HIV, Hepatitis B and C, and STIs

HIV/AIDS, hepatitis B, and hepatitis C are spread by contact with bodily fluids (especially blood and semen).

- unprotected sex,
- needle sharing during IV drug use, or
- unsafe blood or medical/dental instruments.

Genital herpes (HSV), genital warts (HPV), gonorrhoea, chlamydia, syphilis and most other sexually transmitted diseases are spread by genital contact.

Prevention:

- In many countries, hepatitis B is now a routine childhood immunisation and need not be repeated. All non-immune travellers should consider vaccination.
- Always use new condoms (preferably brought from your home country).
- IV drug users should not share needles.
- Avoid having tattoos or piercings done.
- In healthcare settings, make sure that needles and syringes are sterile and not shared between patients.
- Call International SOS or your corporate medical department if you are hospitalised.
- Be aware of your risk when assisting anyone with an injury. Protect yourself from contact with bodily fluids.
- Seek medical attention within 24 hours if you accidentally come into contact with someone else's bodily fluids.

Hepatitis B

The Disease

The hepatitis B virus, like HIV, is transmitted through contact with blood, blood products or body fluids. Modes of transmission include:

- Unprotected sexual intercourse
- Infected blood transfusions
- Needle sharing by IV drug users
- Use of unsterilized needles, syringes or equipment
- From mother to child during childbirth

Symptoms develop between 45 and 160 days after infection when the virus invades the liver causing fever, abdominal pain, nausea and loss of appetite. Jaundice (yellowing of the skin and eyes) is a common feature and the urine may become dark. There is no specific treatment and recovery usually takes about four weeks. Many individuals may have no symptoms but can still be infectious to others.

Approximately 1 in 10 of those infected do not recover fully and suffer ongoing liver damage called chronic hepatitis B - this can eventually cause liver cirrhosis and/or cancer. The very young and the elderly are more likely to develop a chronic infection.

Vaccination

In many countries, hepatitis B is included in the routine childhood immunizations and need not be repeated. For unvaccinated travelers:

Routine schedule

- Individual hepatitis B vaccination requires a series of three injections given on days zero, 30 and after 6-12 months.
- A combined vaccine for hepatitis A and B is available in many countries. It also requires a series of three injections given on days zero, 30 and after six months.

Accelerated schedule

Can be used for travelers who will depart before the first two doses of the routine schedule can be given:

- Use an *individual* hepatitis B vaccine
- Doses on days 0, 7 and 21
- Fourth dose required after 6 months

Accelerated combined hepatitis A and B vaccine

- Doses on days 0, 7 and 21
- Fourth dose of hepatitis B alone or the combined vaccine required after 12 months

Measles

Food & Water

Drink bottled water. Care with food.

Food Risk

Food-borne illness is common. To reduce your risk:

- Food served in larger hotels and well-known restaurants should be safe.
- Busier restaurants may be safer as they are more likely to serve freshly cooked food.
- Always choose food that has been freshly cooked and is served hot.
- Avoid food that has been stored warm – such as in a “bain marie.”
- Avoid raw foods, shellfish, pre-peeled fruit and salad.
- Fruit that you wash and peel yourself is safe.
- Avoid street vendors and market food because the standard of hygiene may be low and food may not be fresh.
- Cases of multidrug-resistant *Salmonella* have been linked to the consumption of beef, beef products (dried beef or beef jerky) and fresh cheese (including queso fresco and Oaxaca).
- Cases of *Cyclospora* infection (with gastrointestinal symptoms) have been reported in travellers returning from Mexico.

Water and Beverages

Tap water is unsafe.

- Drink only bottled or boiled water or carbonated drinks.
 - Avoid ice, as it may have been made from unsafe water.
-

Disease Risk

Zika risk may be present. Other health threats are present.

Zika virus

The first locally-transmitted cases were reported in November 2015, and the country experienced a large outbreak with thousands of cases in 2016-2017. Birth defects related to Zika infection in pregnant people have been documented. Cases continue to be reported and zika transmission is ongoing in many states. The mosquitoes which transmit Zika are not likely to be found above 2,000 metres (6,561 feet) above sea level.

Malaria

Risk in some areas

Malaria Bite Prevention

Risk of malaria is present throughout the year in some parts of Mexico, particularly in rural areas of Campeche, Chiapas, Chihuahua and Sinaloa. These states continue to report active transmission.

Locally-acquired cases were identified in Oaxaca and Tabasco in 2022. Nayarit, Quintana Roo and Sonora remain areas with residual transmission though no locally-acquired cases have been reported in recent years.

Aguascalientes, Baja California, Baja California Sur, Mexico City, Coahuila, Colima, Durango, State of Mexico, Guanajuato, Guerrero, Hidalgo, Jalisco, Michoacan, Morelos, Nuevo Leon, Puebla, Queretaro, San Luis Potosi, Tamaulipas, Tlaxcala, Veracruz, Yucatan and Zacatecas have not reported any cases of malaria in the last 10 years.

There is no malaria along the United States-Mexico border.

Prevention:

- mosquito bite avoidance
- medication: consult your travel health doctor for an individual recommendation. Some authorities recommend preventive medication if visiting the risk areas



Rabies

Avoid domestic and wild animals and bats

Rabies

Although the risk from dogs was declared eliminated in 2019, several human cases of rabies have been documented since, particularly from bats and cats. The risk is present in many areas, including Cancun, Quintana Roo.

Destination Guide for Mexico

Security Overview

Personal Security

STANDING TRAVEL ADVICE

- Travel to HIGH travel risk areas should be for essential purposes and should be arranged in close liaison with local contacts. Workforce should carefully plan all aspects of their itinerary and be confident in their accommodation, transport, communication and security arrangements prior to travel. Measures include travelling with a private, low-profile vehicle and trusted driver and undertaking movement in daylight hours only. Journey plans should allow sufficient time for delays, such as a breakdown. Given the difficulties associated with arranging secure accommodation in US border areas, avoid overnight stays and arrange lodging in the US where possible.
- Crime poses a significant risk in Mexico and criminals are often armed; take stringent security precautions at all times. If accosted by a criminal, assume that the assailant is armed and do nothing to resist or antagonise them.
- Keep a low profile and avoid displaying valuables in public, as victims are often specifically targeted based on appearance, as well as on perceived vulnerability and/or lack of awareness.
- Short-term 'express' kidnapping poses a risk to business travellers. Foreign nationals should maintain a low profile while in the country. Longer-term international assignees should avoid establishing routines and vary the timings and routes of journeys.
- Avoid providing personal information to anyone outside of your trusted group; do not volunteer information to strangers. Refrain from posting personal and travel information on social media and networking sites.
- Virtual kidnapping is a crime where-in a target typically receives a call and is threatened and extorted for payment using deception and personal information. It is recommended to ignore calls and messages from unknown numbers if possible. In the event of receiving such a call, it is advised to hang up and contact the International SOS Assistance Centre.
- Physical theft of credit cards is a concern. Avoid withdrawing money from ATMs on the street and instead opt for those located in bank branches.
- Occasional politically motivated unrest is a possibility. Avoid all demonstrations as a precaution.
- Do not travel on foot after dark, or in unfamiliar or peripheral districts.
- Driving standards are variable. Do not self-drive, but pre-arrange hire of a private vehicle and experienced local driver through your hotel or host company. Keep windows up and doors locked at all times, and do not undertake road travel outside urban centres after dark.
- Protesters, community self-defence groups, and organised criminal groups may erect roadblocks to block passage into and out of towns and municipalities. Do not attempt to cross any roadblocks, as this may provoke a hostile reaction. Vigilantes and organised criminal groups have fired at vehicles that fail to stop at roadblocks.
- Transportation booked through the hotel or company or a rideshare app is suitable in most urban areas. Never hail a taxi from the street.
- In the event of a security emergency, it is advisable to reach out the Assistance Centre for support.
- Vigilantly monitor your financial statements and accounts during and after travel. If your financial information was compromised, it can take several weeks before fraudulent purchases are attempted.
- Certain business travellers, including employees of media and non-governmental organisations, may wish to take additional precautions to safeguard personal electronics and communications.
- Be aware of your surroundings and take precautions against unwanted attention. Drink spiking is a concern, especially in resort areas.

Crime

Occurs in many areas, sometimes violent

CRIME

Opportunistic crime/petty theft

Street crimes such as pickpocketing and mugging pose a significant risk to business travellers, particularly in urban areas. Crowded squares, transport terminals, the metro and buses are favoured targets for pickpockets and bag-snatchers, who often work in teams. Criminals may stake out airports, hotel lobbies and restaurants to grab bags or phones from distracted patrons. Robbers particularly target foreign nationals who appear to be rich, lost and/or drunk, as well as unaccompanied. Businesswomen tend to face a higher level of risk from crime due to perceived vulnerability. There have been reports of bar

patrons being drugged and subsequently robbed; business travellers should order drinks at the bar, where their preparation can be observed, and then not leave them unattended. There have also been occasional reports of the use of substandard or tainted alcohol by some bars, including in more upscale resorts. If possible, foreign nationals should request a brand name or higher quality alcohol while ordering a drink, and only accept food and drinks from staff members in official venue uniforms.

Sexual assault

Sexual assault is a persistent threat in both urban and rural areas throughout Mexico. Most incidences of sexual assault occur after dark or in the early morning hours. While business travellers can be targeted regardless of gender, businesswomen tend to face a higher level of risk. Foreign nationals should avoid traveling alone and seek alternative transport rather than crowded buses or subways, at all times.

Fraud

Business travellers should be aware of the risk of card-skimming. Foreign nationals should be careful when withdrawing money from ATMs and check if any suspicious devices are attached to the machine. Criminals also target users of ATMs; Mobile workforce should only use ATMs during normal business hours and at indoor commercial establishments, rather than machines that are accessible from the street. Both legitimate and imposter police officers have scammed tourists by extorting payments through the imposition of false fines or soliciting bribes.

Road banditry

The Army and National Guard units patrol highways across the country to prevent carjacking, robbery and kidnapping. Bandits and criminal groups pose a danger to business travellers on isolated highways, particularly at night and, most often, in rural areas. Illegal checkpoints are common in HIGH-risk areas, particularly in Guanajuato, Guerrero, Michoacan, Tamaulipas, and Zacatecas states. Vehicle thieves primarily target dark-coloured trucks and sports utility vehicles (SUVs). More sophisticated criminals may divert trucks to steal cargo; cargo robbery is most common in highways in Mexico, Puebla, Michoacan and Tamaulipas states. Armed criminals occasionally hold up buses, trucks, taxi passengers and private cars, and incidents can lead to short-term abductions. Foreign and local nationals have been killed or injured for resisting armed criminals and/or failing to make a stop at their checkpoints on roads.

Overland travel can be dangerous due to crime and the potential of accidents. It is advised to only undertake travel in a private vehicle with a trusted local driver during daylight hours using toll highways whenever possible. Self-driving is not advisable unless very familiar with the country.

Violence related to organised crime

Frequent clashes between rival criminal factions, or between these groups and the security forces, have led to escalating violence across multiple states. The historic hot spots of drug-related violence are the northern border states (Baja California, Chihuahua, Nuevo Leon, Sonora and Tamaulipas), as well as the states along the Pacific coast (Colima, Sinaloa, Jalisco, Guerrero and Michoacán). In recent years, the north-central states of Guanajuato and Zacatecas have also become hot spots of violence related to organised crime.

Major cities such as Celaya, Ciudad Juárez, Ciudad Obregón, Culiacan, Fresnillo, Irapuato, Leon, Matamoros, Tijuana, Reynosa and Zacatecas experience frequent shoot-outs and violent crime associated with organised crime groups. Although such clashes usually do not affect business travellers directly, they pose significant incidental risks to anyone in the vicinity. Armed criminals have been known to hijack the vehicles of passers-by to block highways and city streets amid ongoing security operations.

Piracy

In recent years, maritime piracy has been a growing issue that primarily involves criminal groups boarding and robbing platforms and vessels supporting the oil industry. The areas off the coast of Campeche and Tabasco states have been most affected by such criminal activities. To a lesser extent, fishing boats, yachts and tourist boats are also targeted for theft.

Assailants are usually armed, tend to operate in groups of small motor boats after dark, and have occasionally posed as fishermen to approach boats. They are often members of organised criminal groups and seek to rob personal belongings, communication and navigation instruments, wiring and other equipment.

People operating vessels and equipment should maintain heightened vigilance if operating in the region and consider additional layers of security. Those undertaking tourist travel are recommended to exercise precautions and minimise exposure to areas of the Gulf of America/Mexico surrounding HIGH travel risk states such as Veracruz.

Terrorism

Minimal risk to foreigners

TERRORISM

The risk of international terrorism is low and is unlikely to affect business travellers. There is a persistent, low risk that Islamic extremists belonging to or inspired by a transnational organisation might attempt to enter the US via Mexico, or perpetrate an attack targeting US or European interests in the country. However, the threat is mitigated by the significant security presence in border cities and absence of communities that could be vulnerable to radicalisation, and there is no known evidence to suggest that Islamist extremists are seeking to expand their activity or presence in Mexico.

There is also a low but latent risk from small militant groups that are based in the southern states, specifically Chiapas. While there have not been any recent reports of notable activity by such groups, they have not officially disarmed or committed to

any formal peace accord. These organisations have previously targeted domestic infrastructure in an attempt to promote their political views, but do not usually attack foreign businesses.

Kidnapping

KIDNAPPING

Abduction remains a risk, with the majority of victims being local nationals, who are taken either to extort a ransom payment or to coerce someone else into taking a specific action. Foreign nationals have been targeted, with a few cases being fatal. In March 2023, four US citizens were abducted in Matamoros (Tamaulipas state) after their vehicle was attacked. Business travellers and international assignees should take specific precautions, including varying daily routines, and refrain from sharing itinerary and accommodation details with acquaintances or strangers or discussing business or financial affairs in public spaces. Kidnappings most commonly occur outside the victim's home or office. According to the authorities, the states with the highest number of kidnappings are Chihuahua, Mexico and Veracruz.

Express kidnapping poses a higher risk to foreign nationals than kidnap-for-ransom, particularly in major urban centres, including the capital Mexico City, Guadalajara (Jalisco state) and Monterrey (Nuevo Leon state). In this type of attack, thieves co-operate with or pose as taxi drivers, coercing their passengers to either withdraw cash from ATMs, pay through a point-of-sale terminal or transfer the money through a bank application. Express kidnappers are known to operate in upmarket locations, especially near banks and expensive restaurants, and select victims whose appearance suggests that they are wealthy. Cases of express kidnapping have involved hotel, bar and restaurant staff at times.

To minimise the risk of express kidnapping, it is advisable to use pre-arranged transport (via a secure provider or the hotel) or ride-share apps with adequate verification of the driver's identity. Never hail a taxi from the street.

Virtual kidnap-for-ransom is a growing trend, especially at hotels. In these schemes, scammers attempt to extort ransom payments from the victims, trying to manipulate them into believing that they are under organised crime surveillance and may be harmed if they do not comply with the scammer's demands. Alternatively, the scammers may try to convince the victim that a loved one or co-worker is in imminent danger.

Virtual kidnappers may leverage hotel staff to target their victims using guests' private information. The criminals, who often claim to work for a 'cartel', contact their victims by phone or chat, pressuring them into isolating themselves in a room or changing their accommodation under the threat of violence. Often, the virtual kidnappers will claim the victim's hotel is being surveilled by gunmen, supposedly ready to attack if their demands are not met. They will then push for a ransom payment from the victim or their associates to ensure their safety. The perpetrators are generally small-time criminals, often inmates, without ties to the large organisations they claim to represent and do not have the capabilities to physically kidnap the victim or otherwise carry on their threats.

To reduce the risk of this type of extortion, mobile workforce should maintain a low profile and not answer unknown numbers if possible, as well as ignore messages from unknown contacts. Workforce should also ensure hotels have a clear and rigorous data and privacy protection policy. They should also avoid providing more personal information than is strictly necessary for booking or checking in at the front desk.

In the event of receiving such a call, business travellers are advised to immediately hang up and dial an [International SOS Assistance Centre](#).

Social Unrest

SOCIAL UNREST

Large-scale protests and demonstrations over a variety of grievances occur frequently in urban centres, especially in the capital Mexico City. The states of Chiapas, Guerrero, Michoacan, and Oaxaca in particular experience persistent unrest by indigenous communities, teachers' unions, and other social actors, who have been known carry out roadblocks on key highways. Protests can be either peaceful or involve clashes with the police. The Mexican constitution prohibits foreign nationals from participating in political activities.

Protests over corruption, controversial public policies and reforms are frequent in Mexico. Perceived government inaction over insecurity – especially in regard to widespread gendered violence – has also triggered frequent protests by feminist groups in recent years.

The odds of civil unrest and political violence are heightened in the months ahead and after elections at all levels. Protests by groups who are dissatisfied with election results can lead to localised violence for months after voting. Political violence is more acute in the states of Chiapas, Chihuahua, Guerrero, Michoacan, Oaxaca, and Veracruz. However, local political disputes are unlikely to affect business travellers and workforce directly, provided that they avoid street gatherings.

'Celebratory gunfire' is not uncommon in rural areas and peripheral neighbourhoods of urban centres during major holidays and public festivals such as New Year celebrations (31 December-1 January) and Independence Day (15 September).

Conflict

CONFLICT

Mexico is not involved in any conflict with any foreign powers or neighbours; however, military and police units continue to wage armed conflict and operations against drug cartels in the northern border region of Mexico, as well as other states with high levels of organised criminal activity.