

Destination Guide for China

Overview

Destination Risk Levels

- Medium Medical Risk for China
- Low Travel Risk for China
- Low Travel Risk for Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region (XUAR)

Standing Travel Advice

- Travel to China can proceed with standard security precautions. However, some travellers may face increased scrutiny due to their organisational or personal profile and in-country activities. A comprehensive itinerary- and profile-specific assessment is recommended before departure. Contact our Assistance Centre for more detailed assessment and advice.
- Special permits are required for foreign nationals' entry to and travel within the Tibet Autonomous Region, as well as people's entry to certain border areas. The authorities may on occasion restrict travel to or within regions of China with little or no notice during periods of heightened tension. Contact your embassy prior to travel for up-to-date information on travel permit requirements.
- Ensure that the appropriate travel documents (visas, permits, passport with sufficient validity period) have been obtained. Contact the nearest Chinese diplomatic mission prior to travel for up-to-date information on immigration requirements.
- Ensure that official documentation is in order at all times. Carry identification at all times to expedite passage through security checkpoints. Copies of residence permits and the identification and visa page of passports should be accepted in most cases. A card in Chinese characters, not romanised form, is helpful.
- Register itineraries and plans with the respective national government traveller programmes, such as US Bureau of Consular Affairs' Smart Traveler Enrolment Program ([STEP](#)) or the Government of Canada's [Registration of Canadians Abroad](#). This is so that the government will have a record of the business travellers' passports and itineraries during their travel, can contact them and will be aware of their details should any complications arise.
- Take basic precautions, such as exercising healthy suspicion of strangers and avoiding ostentatious displays of wealth, to reduce the risk of falling victim to petty and street crime, opportunistic scams and confidence tricks. Confidence tricksters may target foreign nationals at entertainment establishments and tourist spots. Do not accept food or drinks from unidentified or recently met individuals unless accompanied by a trusted local host.
- Avoid all demonstrations as a routine precaution.
- Avoid discussing topics involving religion, political systems and areas concerning ethnic relationships in China.
- Officials can confiscate items considered to be detrimental to China's political and social stability, in particular material perceived to be linked to the above topics. These include undeveloped films, recorded material, publications and computers. Carrying politically sensitive material or engaging in political activism, or being perceived as such, may result in temporary detainment and deportation.
- Anti-foreigner sentiment is possible during periods of heightened national sentiment, for example, during diplomatic disputes.
- Small-scale bombings, acts of arson and knife attacks related to business or personnel disputes are not unusual, though these are very unlikely to directly target foreign nationals. Report suspicious behaviour and packages to the authorities.
- Do not self-drive unless very familiar with local conditions. Road conditions and driving standards vary from urban to rural areas.
- Buses and other forms of public transport can attract pickpockets. Maintain vigilance over your personal possessions.
- Taxis are the safest and easiest way to get around. However, unlicensed taxis have been known to overcharge their customers. These include taxis that have been hailed at airports or hotels. Foreign nationals should use only a reputable taxi operator or book taxis through major hotels. All taxis are metered and people should ensure that the meter is on before commencing the journey.
- Research the performance record of Chinese domestic airlines and, if in doubt, seek additional advice regarding their suitability while making internal air travel plans.
- Information security and leaks of sensitive commercial data are issues in China. Business travellers should exercise stringent information security protocols, including the below (see Communications section for more details):
- Minimise the number of devices they bring into the country.
- Remove sensitive material on their devices.
- Exercise a high degree of caution before sending documents or information abroad that would fall under the coverage of China's state secrets law.

- Comply with local legislation.

Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region (XUAR)

- Travel to XUAR can proceed provided the traveller is locally hosted and a comprehensive journey management plan is in place.
- Carry identification to ease and speed passage through security checkpoints. Copies of residence permits, and the identification and visa page of passports should be accepted in most cases. Consider carrying a card stating your particulars in Chinese (in Simplified Chinese, not Traditional Chinese and not Romanised letters).
- Avoid engaging in conversations on sensitive topics such as domestic politics and human rights issues. Refrain from actions that may attract greater scrutiny from the authorities. These include engaging with political groups, local charities, and taking photographs outside tourist locations such as government or security facilities.

Active Alerts (4)

● Notice | Category

Bird flu infections in several areas, avoid contact with birds, follow hygiene measures

10 September 2025 at 03:42

Location : China

Category : Avian Influenza H9N2

Several H9N2 bird flu (avian influenza) infections have been reported. Bird flu can cause a mild-to-severe respiratory illness, which may be fatal. Most people who are infected have had direct exposure to birds. There is no suggestion of a human-to-human outbreak. The risk of infection in people who do not have contact with birds is low. Prevent infection by paying attention to hygiene and avoiding contact with birds and their environment.

Advice :

Do the following:

- Avoid farms and 'wet markets', where live animals may be present.
- Do not touch birds, even if they appear healthy. Ensure all poultry and eggs are thoroughly cooked.
- Do not eat raw products, such as raw duck blood.
- Wash your hands before and after preparing food and before eating.
- Do not swim in any body of water that is used by birds.
- Consider having an influenza vaccination. Although it will not protect you against bird flu, it reduces your risk of a 'co-infection' with human influenza.
- Monitor your health.
- Workforce in China who develop flu-like symptoms should call the Assistance Centre for advice before seeking care at a medical facility.

● Advisory | Category

China: Southern provinces: Expect residual disruption following passage of former severe tropical storm Tapah

09 September 2025 at 09:11

Location : Asia & the Pacific

Category : Storm, Transport disruption

Expect residual disruption following the passage of former severe tropical storm Tapah. The weather system has weakened into a tropical depression (lowest on a six-tier scale) and currently lies over Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region. It is expected to gradually move westwards and weaken further. According to the National Meteorological Centre (NMC), heavy-to-torrential rain has been forecast in parts of Guangxi and Guangdong, Guizhou, Hainan and Yunnan provinces **until 14.00** (local time) on **10 September**. There is a high risk of flash floods and landslides in impacted areas. In Hong Kong and Macau (both China SAR), train, ferry and flight operations have resumed following earlier suspensions.

Advice :

- Plan travel accounting for residual disruption in Guangdong, Guangxi, Guizhou, Hainan and Yunnan. Maintain flexible itineraries and account for short-notice disruption to transport.
- Monitor the [China Meteorological Administration](#) (CMA) and [NMC](#) websites for up-to-date information on prevailing weather conditions and follow all official directives.
- **We do not hold specific information on transport schedules.** Contact the relevant transport provider to reconfirm bookings. In the event of any cancellations, your travel agency will be able to assist with alternative arrangements.
- Low-lying areas are especially vulnerable to flooding. Reconfirm the feasibility of overland journeys from local hosts and the authorities before setting out. Flash floods and landslides are possible during and after prolonged periods of heavy rain. Do not attempt to cross flooded roads. If you come across one, seek an alternative route to your destination.
- Account for prolonged disruption to essential services, especially in rural and semi-urban areas. Charge all communication devices and, if feasible, keep extra batteries for backup. Monitor our China alerts for updates.

● Notice | Category

Chikungunya in Guangdong province, avoid mosquito bites

15 July 2025 at 22:13

Location : Asia & the Pacific

Category : Chikungunya

Latest update: More cities affected, infections are continuing to decline. Locally acquired chikungunya infections have been reported in Foshan City and other areas of Guangdong province. Chikungunya is a viral disease spread through mosquito bites. It can cause a severe illness, particularly in new-born babies, older adults, and people with underlying health issues (such as diabetes, heart disease, weakened immune system). There is no specific treatment. Prevention is through avoiding mosquito bites, and vaccination may be recommended for some people (however availability is limited). Be aware that people confirmed infected with chikungunya may be hospitalised in isolation until 24 hours without fever, and at least 7 day from the onset of symptoms.

Advice :

Prevent mosquito bites:

- Wear clothes that cover most of your body (long sleeves, long pants, socks).
- Use an insect repellent with one of these active ingredients:
 - DEET
 - Picaridin
 - PMD
 - IR3535
- Check that windows are covered with screens or fly-wire.
- Use "knock-down" insect spray to kill mosquitoes in your room.
- Choose air-conditioned accommodation if possible.

Have a travel health consult. Discuss your personal risk of chikungunya and prevention measures, including vaccination. This is especially important for people at higher risk of severe illness.

● Notice | Category

North Asia: Expect intermittent disruption during monsoon season until November (Revised)

20 June 2025 at 12:27

Location : Asia & the Pacific

Category : Flood, Landslide, Storm, Infrastructure outage

Expect intermittent disruption **until November** during the ongoing summer monsoon season in **China, Hong Kong, Macao** (both China SAR), **Japan, North Korea, South Korea** and **Taiwan** (China). The region experienced this year's first weather system, Severe Tropical Storm Wutip, in mid-June, which caused logistical disruption along its passage in southern China. Neighbouring countries and regions also experienced heavy rainfall due to the impact of Wutip. Further typhoons can be expected in the coming months, which could pose challenge to travel logistics. Maintain flexible itineraries and monitor updates from meteorological agencies and local contacts to reconfirm feasibility of travel.

Advice :

- Monitor the meteorological department websites of [China](#), [Hong Kong](#), [Japan](#), [Macao](#), [South Korea](#) and [Taiwan](#) for prevailing weather conditions and typhoon-related warnings. Follow all official directives, including any evacuation orders.
 - Reconfirm the feasibility of overland journeys with local contacts before setting out. Ensure that your vehicle is in good condition and appropriately equipped for the weather conditions.
 - Heavy rain and poor visibility may cause short-notice flight delays or cancellations. **We do not hold specific information on flights or other transport.** Contact the airport, the airline or other relevant service providers directly to confirm schedules.
 - Avoid surge-prone or flooded areas. Be aware that flash flooding in riverine or coastal areas and landslides are possible in mountainous areas following heavy rain. Do not attempt to drive or walk through flooded areas.
 - Essential services such as electricity and communications may be disrupted by severe rainfall. Charge all communications devices and, where feasible, keep extra batteries for backup.
 - Monitor our alerts for updates.
-

Destination Guide for China

Before You Travel

Visa Requirements

IMMIGRATION REQUIREMENTS AND PROCEDURES

British

Passport Required: Yes
Visa Required: Yes
Return Ticket Required: Yes

Australian

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

Canadian

Passport Required: Yes
Visa Required: Yes
Return Ticket Required: Yes

USA

Passport Required: Yes
Visa Required: Yes
Return Ticket Required: Yes

Visas

1. EU countries mentioned [here](#) are exempt from visa requirement if entering into China for no more than 30 days for the purpose of business, tourism, family or friends visits, exchange and transit.

All nationals, including those referred to in the chart above, require visas to enter and stay in China. Hong Kong (SAR), Macao (SAR) and Taiwan (China) residents entering the mainland are exempt from visa and other entry requirements. However, they should be in possession of a valid 'Mainland Travel Permit for Hong Kong and Macao Residents' or 'Mainland Travel Permit for Taiwan Residents' to enter the mainland.

China has extended visa-free entry to travellers holding ordinary passports from the countries mentioned [here](#), provided they are staying for no more than 30 days for business, tourism, family visit and transit purposes.

Business travellers are required to obtain business visas (Visa M) and provide an official invitation from the company or institution in China at the time of application, in addition to an invitation letter issued by an authorised Chinese agency. Tourist visa (Visa L) applications require an invitation letter from a duly authorised tourism unit, along with a photocopy of the hotel reservation and round-trip airline ticket. The invitation letter can also be issued by an individual, a company or an institution in China. However, if sponsored by an individual, a copy of his or her photo identification should be attached. Transit passengers are required to obtain a transit visa (Visa G).

There are three types of transits without a visa – 24-hour, 72-hour, 144-hour and 240-hour. A visa is not required for air, train and ship passengers transiting in the Chinese mainland for a stay of no more than 24 hours before heading for a third country or region. A 72-hour visa-free transit is valid for international airports in [15 cities](#). A 144-hour visa-free transit policy is applicable when entering China from Baiyun International Airport, Jieyang Chaoshan International Airport, Shenzhen Bao'an International Airport and Zhengzhou Xingzheng International Airport. Transit passengers must leave China from one of the 32 open ports in Guangdong province. A 240-hour (ten days) visa-free transit is available for foreign nationals from [55 countries](#). They can stay in certain Chinese cities by entering and exiting through [eligible ports](#). However, they must have a valid onwards ticket and an international travel document valid for three months or more at the time of arrival.

Meanwhile, transit passengers entering from Hangzhou Xiaoshan International Airport (HGH), Nanjing Lukou International Airport (NKG), Shanghai Hongqiao International Airport (SHA), Shanghai Port International Cruise Terminal, Shanghai Pudong International Airport (PVG), Shanghai Railway Station or Shanghai Wusongkou International Cruise Terminal do not require a transit visa while visiting Jiangsu province, Shanghai municipality and Zhejiang province for up to 144 hours. Holders of a valid

APEC Business Travel Card automatically hold a multiple-entry visa valid for three years, but they can only stay in China for no more than two months on each visit. Business travellers intending to work or stay longer in China should obtain relevant visas. Further information can be found on the Ministry of Foreign Affairs [website](#).

Tighter immigration laws are in place for foreign nationals working or living in the country beyond the time period stated in their employment contract or visa. These include reducing the minimum duration of the residence certificate, which is required by foreign nationals with a work visa (Visa Z). Foreign nationals will be required to provide their biometric data when applying for residence certificates. Foreign nationals violating Chinese immigration laws or overstaying the period allowed by their visa may be given an exit deadline, fined or, in some cases, barred from entering China for ten years.

Procedures

Foreign nationals must fill in arrival and departure documents, including a customs baggage declaration form (hereinafter declaration form) when entering and leaving the country, as well as a health declaration form. Those who have nothing to declare shall choose the green channel, and those carrying articles to declare shall choose the red channel. A declaration form verified and endorsed by the customs shall be kept properly and re-submitted to the customs at the time of return if necessary. Foreign nationals and business travellers may be subjected to medical screening such as body temperature scanning, throat or nasal swabs or medical examinations while entering China.

For foreign nationals who undertake multiple trips to and from Hong Kong or Macao over a period of 15 days and for those undertaking frequent inbound and outbound trips, the customs officials will only release articles they need for their journey. For more information, refer to the [guide](#). Business travellers should register their place of residence with the local Public Security Bureau within 24 hours of arrival. Hotels usually perform this procedure when business travellers check in.

Entry/Exit Requirements

Entry/Exit requirements

All foreign nationals require a passport valid for at least six months.

Foreign nationals applying for residency in Beijing or Qingdao (Shandong province) need to submit a Certificate of No Criminal Conviction (CNCC), commonly known as a police clearance letter. The CNCC must be notarised in the foreign national's home country and authenticated by a Chinese consulate abroad, with a Chinese translation attached, including the translation company's official seal. This requirement does not apply to short-term business travellers with normal business visas.

China does not recognise dual nationality. The national currency, the renminbi (also known as Chinese yuan), can be taken in and out of the country, but only up to the value of 20,000 yuan. There are no restrictions on foreign currency, except that you should declare any cash that exceeds \$5,000 (or its equivalent in another currency). Permission from a Chinese bank is required to export cash exceeding \$5,000. Other requirements may change at short notice and should be checked before departure.

Foreign nationals intending to travel to the Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR) must obtain a Tibet Travel Permit (TTP) in addition to the Chinese visa. Permits are issued by the Tibet Tourism Bureau and have to be arranged via a local tour company. Permits are issued to both solo business travellers and mixed nationality groups. Business travellers entering from Nepal must ensure that they obtain the required permit from the Chinese embassy in Kathmandu. Foreign nationals should apply for the permit at least 15 days prior to their arrival. Travel to restricted areas such as Mt Everest, Nagri, Nyingchi, Syaka and Tsedang requires special permits. Business travellers should contact their tour operator for further information. It is mandatory to be accompanied by a local guide at all times.

Restrictions on travel to TAR are periodically imposed by the Chinese authorities at short notice. These restrictions may include the suspension of the issuing of travel permits for TAR, sometimes for an unspecified length of time; the suspension of any travel to or from TAR; certain nationalities may not be issued a permit at all; restrictions on travel may be placed in certain areas within TAR; and access to some areas might be totally closed. Such restrictions can also affect business travellers who already possess a permit. Business travellers should check with tour operators or travel agents about the restrictions and necessary documents required.

Cannabidiol (CBD) is banned in mainland China. It is prohibited to import, sell, purchase, process or consume CBD and CBD-containing products of all types. Detailed information regarding prohibited and restricted items can be found [here](#). Violations are punishable by significant fines and prison sentences.

Cultural Tips

CULTURAL ISSUES AND ETIQUETTE

General Cultural Tips

- 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 highly varied; violence is rare, but may be more likely in rural than in urban settings.
- Political topics may be sensitive. Avoid criticism of China, its policies or leaders. Avoid speaking about Taiwan as an independent country.

Business Cultural Tips

- Chinese surnames always form the first part of the name. Hence, Wang Pengxin is Mr Wang.
- When referring to the nation on formal documents or speeches, it is appropriate to use the full title: The People's Republic of China.

Getting There

METHOD OF ARRIVAL

By air

The main international airports are in the capital Beijing, Guangzhou (Guangdong province) and Shanghai. Shanghai has two international airports – Pudong Airport ([PVG](#)) and Hongqiao Airport ([SHA](#)). However, Hongqiao airport mainly handles domestic flights, with limited international flights. In addition to Beijing Capital Airport ([PEK](#)), there is Beijing Daxing International Airport ([PKX](#)). Guangzhou Baiyun International Airport ([CAN](#)), also known as New Baiyun, is the hub for China Southern Airlines and is the third-busiest airport in the country. There are international airports in other major cities of China as well. Kunming Changshui International Airport ([KMG](#)), in Kunming, and Chengdu Shuangliu International Airport ([CTU](#)), in Chengdu, serve Yunnan and Sichuan province, respectively.

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

By land

China shares borders with Afghanistan, Bhutan, India, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Laos, Mongolia, Myanmar, Nepal, North Korea, Pakistan, Russia, Tajikistan and Vietnam. The borders with Afghanistan, Bhutan and India are closed. It is possible to enter China from all the other countries with a valid Chinese visa and if government policy allows. Business travellers are advised to enquire about the status of the border crossings before setting out. The authorities can close them due to changes in the government policy.

By sea

Regular ferry services connect China with Japan and South Korea.

Procedures

Foreign nationals must fill in arrival and departure documents, including a customs baggage declaration form (hereinafter declaration form) when entering and leaving the country, as well as a health declaration form. Those who have nothing to declare shall choose the green channel, and those carrying articles to declare shall choose the red channel. A declaration form verified and endorsed by the customs shall be kept properly and re-submitted to the customs at the time of return if necessary. Foreign nationals and business travellers may be subjected to medical screening such as body temperature scanning, throat or nasal swabs or medical examinations while entering China.

For foreign nationals who undertake multiple trips to and from Hong Kong or Macao over a period of 15 days and for those undertaking frequent inbound and outbound trips, the customs officials will only release articles they need for their journey. For more information, refer to the [guide](#). Business travellers should register their place of residence with the local Public Security Bureau within 24 hours of arrival. Hotels usually perform this procedure when business travellers check in.

Getting Around

BY AIR

China has an extensive domestic air network. [China Southern](#), [China Eastern](#), [Hainan](#) and [Air China](#) (the national carrier) are the main long-haul international airlines.

Delays to flights are endemic and often major. Flights can be overbooked during important national holiday periods and people should make reservations in advance. Procedures at China's airports are easy to follow, with all signs and announcements in English, as well as Chinese. Passengers on domestic flights in China are not allowed to carry power banks without a clear 3C mark or those that have been recalled. Visit [here](#) for more related information. Passengers are also required to arrive at the airport 90 minutes before departure time. Baggage theft at the country's airports is a concern.

BY ROAD

Road transport is increasingly viable as more modern motorways are constructed. The motorways are short by international standards, linking neighbouring cities such as Beijing and Tianjin, Chengdu and Chongqing, and Shanghai and Hangzhou. The length of journeys the driver will undertake varies, but for comparatively short trips (between the aforementioned cities for example), road travel is convenient. Traffic drives on the right. Business travellers should be aware of the restrictions on non-local license plates, as well as the odd-even scheme in place in some cities. For example, non-Beijing-registered passenger vehicles should apply for a permit to be able to drive inside the city's sixth ring road and Tongzhou district, as well as some parts of Changping, Huairou and Yanqing districts. Foreign nationals travelling to Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region (XUAR) and Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR) should carry identification documents to expedite passage through security checkpoints. They are also recommended to consult with their local host for traffic regulations.

The quality of intercity buses varies greatly, particularly in more remote areas. If travelling by bus, select an operator through an international tourist company and enquire into its safety record. Ensure that the vehicle is equipped with essential safety provisions, such as reliable radio communications, and that drivers have been thoroughly vetted.

BY TAXI

Taxi services are available in cities. Many city centres are congested and taxis can find it difficult to get around. Business travellers are likely to face problems hiring a taxi without interpreters because most drivers do not speak English. As such, it is advisable to have name of the destination written down in Mandarin by hotel staff or local contacts.

While taxis are the safest and easiest way to get around, unlicensed taxis have been known to overcharge their customers. These include taxis that have been hailed at airports or hotels. Foreign nationals should only use a reputable taxi operator or book taxis through major hotels. All taxis are metered and people should ensure that the meter is on before commencing the journey. Alternatively, negotiate fares before entering the taxi and ask the taxi driver to provide a receipt (*fapiao*). Caution should be exercised in more densely populated areas such as Beijing's Tiananmen Square and Shanghai's the Bund, East Nanjing Road and People's Square.

Ride-hailing services

Ride-hailing services (such as Didi, Meituan, etc.) are another popular means of transportation in big cities. They offer cars with better condition and services than taxis, especially for 'Premier' and 'Luxe' services. They can also be used to hire taxis.

BY TRAIN

China has an extensive passenger train system. Rail travel is an alternative to air travel on short routes. Many business travellers use the Shanghai-Suzhou-Nanjing rail route – one of the most comfortable and modern in China – as a more convenient alternative to flying the short distances between these adjacent cities. The high-speed rail network is a viable option for long-distance journeys. A high-speed rail line connecting the cities of Beijing and Guangzhou takes around eight hours to complete the journey; it has 35 stops and passes through major cities; the high-speed rail line connecting Beijing and Shanghai takes around four and a half hours. The majority of provincial capital cities is linked by the high-speed railway. When using bullet or high-speed trains in China, first-class or business-class seats are preferable. Second-class seats tend to be subject to availability due to their cheaper cost. Business travellers should not purchase Standing Room train tickets as holders are only allowed to stand in the aisle or at the connection of a second-class carriage, an uncomfortable experience especially for long journeys. Tickets can be booked in advance either online or via telephone (+86 12306).

Baggage theft and robbery may happen in dense crowds at entrance halls and on platforms. Foreign nationals and business travellers can use the spacious first-class waiting rooms to avoid crowded platforms. Security on short train journeys is generally good. Thieves generally target travellers on long-distance routes, on which they can operate while passengers are asleep. Ensure that the train compartment contains packages belonging only to you and other occupants. Store personal belongings in a safe place and do not leave the compartment unattended.

BY OTHER MEANS

By bus

Buses are not recommended for business travellers, as some are extremely crowded and frequented by pickpockets.

BUSINESSWOMEN

There are no specific risks for female business travellers. The country is largely considered safe for female business travellers. However, all women are advised to follow sensible precautions such as:

- Observe and respect local clothing customs.
 - Politely decline invitations that would take you beyond your personal comfort levels, even if faced by amicable pressure to behave otherwise.
 - Plan your itineraries bearing in mind risks incurred by women in various modes of transport available in your location. Prioritise security in your choice of transport. In remote areas, do not travel on public transport after dark without a trusted male companion.
 - Be prepared to ask trusted contacts to accompany you to your car, a taxi or your hotel after dark.
-

Working Week

WORKING WEEK

- Working week: Monday to Friday
 - Government departments, banks and private offices: 09.00-17.00/18.00, though some close earlier in the afternoon.
-

Language & Money

LANGUAGE

Mandarin is the official language, known locally as Putonghua. It is spoken in business circles throughout the entire country. Chinese business people are increasingly learning to speak English, but in many cases, an interpreter is required. English is not widely spoken outside business circles.

MONEY

The renminbi (RMB) is the official currency of China. It is also known as the yuan. The use of foreign currency is prohibited. Business travellers are advised to carry small-denomination notes to pay taxi fares and other minor expenses. Most taxis do not accept credit cards in China. Major credit cards, such as Visa, MasterCard and American Express, can be used in business-class hotels, restaurants and larger department stores in major cities, but are not widely accepted in smaller cities and shops. ATMs that accept foreign credit cards are available in most major cities. Of these, the Bank of China and the Industrial and Commercial Bank of China are the most reliable and bilingual. Electronic payments and wallets, such as WeChat Pay and Alipay, via smartphones are used almost everywhere, even in rural and remote areas. In addition to the scanning for payment features, they also allow individuals to shop online, book air/train tickets, order food delivery, hail for a taxi, pay public utilities bills and more as a third-party payment platform. Business travellers can refer to Guide to Payment Services in China on The People's Bank of China [website](#) for more details.

Foreign currency can be exchanged at banks to avoid the prevalent issue of convincing counterfeit money. Business travellers should not change money with individuals in the street or illegally on the black market. Money exchangers offering unrealistic exchange rates may be using fake currency. Also, the authorities launch frequent crackdowns on black marketers, posing a risk to anyone found dealing with them.

Tipping

TIPPING

Tipping is not very common as service charges are often already included in the bill. Some upscale restaurants and hotels may include a service charge of 10-15%. However, customers can leave a tip as per the service. Taxi drivers do not expect to be tipped.

Geography & Weather

CLIMATE

Climate overview

- China experiences regional variations in climatic conditions due to its vast size.
- Most of China lies in northern temperate zone with cold winters (December to February) and hot, humid summers (June to August).
- Heavy rain occurs throughout the year.
- Monitor the website of the [National Meteorological Centre](#) for weather forecast and warnings.

Flooding and landslides

- Annual flooding is common in central, east and south China, particularly in the Yangtze river basin.
- During the monsoon season from April to October, flooding and rainstorms can disrupt the provision of basic services and travel in affected areas.
- Mudslides and landslides caused by heavy rain are also common in mountainous areas, particularly in the south-western province of Yunnan.
- Urban centres, including central areas of cities, are not immune from significant flooding.
- Drainage is inadequate in major cities, including the capital Beijing, which exacerbates flooding.

Typhoons

- The typhoon season, which typically lasts between May and December, affects areas along the southern and eastern coasts, which includes Fujian, Guangdong, Guangxi, Hainan, Jiangsu and Zhejiang provinces.
- China experiences an average of seven typhoons a year.
- Disruption to transport and essential services is common during the passage of typhoons.

Earthquakes

- China lies in a seismically active zone.
- South-western parts such as Sichuan and Yunnan provinces and Xizang and Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Regions are especially prone to earthquakes.
- Frequent significant earthquakes occur in the country.
- Fatalities, damage to property and infrastructure, and disruption to road travel and communications networks are reported following earthquakes.
- Monitor the website of the [China Earthquake Networks Center](#) for alerts.

Sandstorms

- Northern areas such as Xinjiang Uighur, Inner Mongolia and Ningxia Hui autonomous regions, as well as Beijing and Gansu, Hebei, Heilongjiang, Jilin, Shaanxi and Shanxi provinces, are vulnerable to sandstorms.
- Strong winds may exacerbate the issue.
- Poor visibility may cause disruption to air and road travel.

Heavy snowfall

- Heavy snowfall occurs between December and February.
- North, north-eastern and north-western regions are especially vulnerable to avalanches and blizzards.
- Heavy snow and poor visibility can cause short-notice disruption to air, rail and road travel.

GEOGRAPHY

China is the world's third-largest country, after Russia and Canada. It is located in north-eastern Asia, along the Pacific Ocean coastline. With an area of 3.7m sq miles (9.6m sq km), it borders the following countries: Afghanistan, Bhutan, India, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Laos, Mongolia, Myanmar, Nepal, North Korea, Pakistan, Russia, Tajikistan and Vietnam. China's vast terrain includes plateaus, plains, basins, foothills, rivers and lakes. Approximately two-thirds of the country is mountainous. For administrative purposes, the country is divided into 23 provinces, five autonomous regions, four centrally administered municipalities and two special administrative regions. Apart from the capital Beijing, centrally administered municipalities include Chongqing, Shanghai and Tianjin.

International Dialing & Power

DIALLING CODES

Country Code : 86

IDD Prefix (International Direct Dialling) : 00

NDD Prefix (National Direct Dialling) : 0

COMMUNICATIONS

The country has extensive mobile network coverage. Major GSM providers are China Mobile, China Telecom and China Unicom. While public phone booths are available, their usability varies due to a lack of general maintenance. Business travellers can also use pre-paid / pay-as-you-go calling cards, which are available on the respective operators' website/APP as well as their offline stores. Real-name verification is required for registering for a SIM card. Major hotels also have international direct dialling services. Satellite phones and related services are available at local telecommunication companies. A licence is required for the use of satellite phones. Internet access is widely available throughout the country.

Information Security

The China Internet Security Law and the Data Security Law improve the ability of the authorities to combat cybercrime and to oversee the companies' data processing activities. People should exercise a high degree of caution, and implement stringent cybersecurity controls, when travelling to China. Information security and leaks of sensitive commercial data are salient issues. Sensitive topics include religion, political systems and those concerning ethnic relationships in China.

In certain circumstances, the authorities may conduct random inspections of devices for information considered to be detrimental to China's political and social stability, in particular material perceived to be linked to the above topics.

Business travellers should follow the below advice:

- **Minimise the number of devices you bring into the country.** Only carry devices that are absolutely essential. Clean devices, containing only data necessary for the trip with no access to shared networks, should be used if targeted attacks are likely. Consult your IT department on how best to encrypt and secure your devices.
- **Remove sensitive material on your devices** on the aforementioned topics.
- **Exercise a high degree of caution before sending documents or information abroad** that would fall under the coverage of China's state secrets law.
- **Ensure devices are well secured** through strong passwords, and that all storage devices have full disk encryption.
- **Ensure all software, including anti-virus protection, are up to date** prior to travel. Avoid updating software while away.
- **Avoid connecting to insecure wi-fi networks where possible.** Public wi-fi connections are almost always unencrypted. This allows attackers to easily instigate 'man-in-the-middle attacks', where they redirect your browsing request to a malicious website and then run malware on your device. Wherever feasible, connect to public networks using a virtual private network (VPN).
- **Always familiarise yourself with the legal status of any VPN or application** in your destination country prior to travel. The regulations governing the use of VPN in China are complex and not clearly delineated – business travellers should consult their local hosts for best practice on the use of VPNs, and should not use the VPN for activities that may be perceived as violating Chinese law.
- **Keep devices on your person as much as possible.** If unattended, ensure that devices are powered down and well secured. Use hotel safes if you are leaving them in the room.
- **Limit location tracking/turn off your phone's location function** to deter surveillance, with the exception of our Assistance app or other essential applications. Turn off wi-fi and Bluetooth when not in use.
- **Comply with local legislation.** This includes any official requests to inspect devices. If this occurs, inform your IT department as soon as possible and exercise caution when using the device afterwards. Power off devices prior to approaching customs.
- **Run a thorough check of all devices upon your return** and use the 'forget network' setting if you did connect to public wi-fi networks.
- **Obtain profile-specific advice**, taking into account your industry and position in the company.

ELECTRICITY

Calendar

Holidays & Security Dates

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.

01 May - 05 May Labour Day Holiday

Destination Guide for China

Medical Overview

Medical Care

Variable

Standard of Health Care

Let International SOS assist you.

International SOS will assist you to find the best available 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

Selected providers in first tier cities such as Beijing and Shanghai, offer an overall good standard of medical care. In smaller cities, the standard of medical care is lower while in rural areas only basic care may be available.

The large public hospitals in the major cities offer a wide scope of services and specialties. However, high bed-occupancy rates, long waiting times, complex administration, lack of privacy and low levels of English being spoken can cause issues for foreigners.

There are no travel restrictions for evacuating patients out of mainland China.

Medical Contact

Emergency Numbers, hospital and clinic contact information

EMERGENCY NUMBERS

Fire service : 119

Police : 110

Ambulance : 120

Hospitals & Clinics

Beijing Raffles Hospital

Suite 105 Wing 1 Kunsha Building 16 Xinyuanli Chaoyang District

86 1064629112, 86 1087937700

enquiries_beijing@rafflesmedical.com

Beijing United Family Hospital(BJU)

2 Jiangtai Lu Chaoyang District

86 1059277000, 86 1059277185, 86 1059277187, 86 1059277188

precert@ufh.com.cn, referralcenter-bju@ufh.com.cn

China-Japan Friendship Hospital

No. 2 Yinghuayuan East Street Chaoyang District

86 1084205071

zrguoliao@sina.com

Huashan Worldwide Medical Center (Foreigner)

12 Wulumuqi Zhong Road Jing'an District

86 2152887250, 86 2152887850, 86 2152887851, 86 2152889998, 86 2152889999, 86 2162483986, 86 2162499295

Shanghai Jiahui International Hospital

No. 689, Gui Ping Road Xuhui District
86 2153393000, 86 4008683000
info@jiahui.com

Shanghai United Family Hospital and Clinics(SUFH)

699 Ping Tang Road Changning District
86 2122163898, 86 2122163900
shu.referralcenter@ufh.com.cn

Shanghai United Family Pudong Hospital

No. 1598 Xinjinqiao Road Pudong New Area District
86 2138862836, 86 2138862888, 86 4006393900
pdu_precert@ufh.com.cn, shu.referralcenter@ufh.com.cn

Shenzhen New Frontier United Family Hospital

4012 Fuqiang Road Futian District
86 4008919191, 86 75523513600
szu_Frontline@ufh.com.cn, szuprecert@ufh.com.cn

The University of Hong Kong - Shenzhen Hospital

1 Haiyuan 1st Road Futian District
86 75586913333, 86 75586913366, 86 75586913388
imc@hku-szh.org

Raffles Medical Tianjin Clinic

1st Floor Tianjin Yanyuan International Hotel, Apartment Building Zijinshan Road Hexi District
86 2223520143
enquiries_tianjin@rafflesmedical.com

Tianjin United Family Hospital

No. 22 Tianxiaoyuan, Tanjiang Road Hexi District
86 2258568500, 86 4008919191
tj_precert@ufh.com.cn

Vaccinations

Proof of yellow fever vaccination is required for specified travellers to enter

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](#)).
- 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 all travellers and international assignees.

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](#)

Japanese encephalitis

Vaccine is recommended for people who will participate in 'higher risk' activities while in an area where Japanese encephalitis risk exists.

You are engaging in a 'higher risk' activity if you:

- Travel during the peak Japanese encephalitis season (consult the "Health Threats" section of the International SOS country guides to see specific season details for this country).
- Spend a significant amount of time outdoors, particularly in the evening and night-time, in areas outside of cities. (ex. camping, trekking, biking, fishing, hunting, farming).
- Stay in accommodation that will likely have mosquitoes indoors, ex. lacking air conditioning, window screens, and bed nets.
- Spend a month or more in a risk area during transmission season.

Japanese encephalitis vaccine is not available in many of the risk countries. Have the complete vaccine series before departure.

Japanese encephalitis is serious viral illness, spread by mosquitoes. It occurs in most of Asia as well as some parts of the Western Pacific, mostly in rural agricultural areas. Although many people won't have any symptoms, it can cause encephalitis (inflammation of the brain) with permanent brain damage, or be fatal. Prevention is through preventing mosquito bites. In addition, vaccination is recommended for travellers at higher risk.

The Disease

Japanese encephalitis (JE) is serious illness, caused by a virus from the *Flavivirus* family. It is the most common cause of encephalitis (inflammation of the brain) in Asia, affecting children in particular. Spread by mosquitoes, it occurs in most of Asia as well as some parts of the Western Pacific, mostly in rural agricultural areas.

Transmission

The JE virus lives in animal hosts, mostly pigs and wading birds. It is transmitted between these animals by the *Culex* mosquito, which breeds where there is abundant water, such as in rice paddies. *Culex* mosquitoes are night feeders, so there is less chance of JE transmission during the day. Humans are infected when they are bitten by a mosquito carrying the JE virus.

However humans are a "dead-end" host and mosquitoes generally don't become infected through biting people, as the level of virus in humans is low.

Symptoms

Most people who are infected have no symptoms. However about 1% of people will develop encephalitis about 5 to 15 days after being bitten by an infected mosquito. Symptoms usually start suddenly, with fever, headache and vomiting. Severe cases can develop weakness, movement disorders or paralysis. Confusion, drowsiness, seizures and coma can occur. About 20 to 30% of severe cases are fatal, while 30 to 50% of survivors will have permanent brain damage.

Diagnosis

The diagnosis is suspected based on symptoms and travel history. It is confirmed by a specific blood test, or a laboratory test on spinal fluid.

Treatment

No specific treatment is available and management consists of supportive measures.

Prevention

All travellers should take steps to prevent being bitten by mosquitoes.

- When outdoors, use an insect repellent.
- When indoors, use knock-down insect spray, and sleep under mosquito nets.
- Stay in accommodation with air conditioning and window screens.

See the article [Preventing mosquito bites](#) in the International SOS Location Guides for further details.

Vaccination against JE is available, and may be recommended for some travellers at higher risk of infection.

Risk to travellers

See [CDC Japanese Encephalitis Distribution Map](#)

Mostly, the risk to travellers is low, especially short term-visitors and those who only visit urban areas. However the risk is higher for people who stay longer than a month; those who travel to rural areas; those participating in extensive outdoor activities; and those who stay in accommodations without air conditioning, screens, or bed nets.

In areas where JE occurs, the risk of infection is often seasonal, being highest in summer / fall, during rainy seasons or varying with irrigation of crops. In temperate regions such as China, Japan and Korea, Japanese encephalitis transmission is highest from May to September. In northern India and Nepal, peak transmission is from September to December. In tropical regions of Asia and Oceania, Japanese encephalitis occurs year-round. *See individual location information for more details.*

[CDC Japanese Encephalitis 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](#)

Rabies

Consider for certain travellers, especially:

- For international assignees and long-term visitors.
- For children who tend to play with animals and may not admit to being bitten or scratched.
- If you are travelling to a location where quality medical care may not be available immediately after being bitten/scratched by an animal.
(Unvaccinated people need immunoglobulin within 24 hours of an animal injury, and this medication is scarce in some countries. If you are pre-vaccinated, you do not need this immunoglobulin after an injury.)
- If contact with dogs, monkeys or other potentially rabies-carrying animals is likely.
Jogging increases your risk of dog bite.

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.)

[Watch the 1 minute Rabies Video Podcast on Vimeo](#)

[Download the Rabies Facts Infographic PDF](#)

The Disease

Rabies is a preventable viral disease. It occurs in more than 150 countries worldwide and is transmitted to humans from domestic and wild animals.

Transmission

People can get it when they are bitten or scratched by an infected or "rabid" animal – most frequently a dog. Rabies from bats is common in the Americas, Australia and Western Europe. Human exposure to rabies through foxes, coyotes, raccoons, skunks, jackals, mongooses and other carnivore species is known but less common.

Symptoms

Symptoms take a highly variable time to develop, usually between one to three months but may take up to a year. When they begin, they are non-specific such as fever, tingling or numbness near the bite site. As the virus travels along the nerves, it causes neurologic symptoms: anxiety, paralysis, and characteristic hydrophobia. People with hydrophobia experience muscle spasms in the muscles used for swallowing when they see, hear or think about water. Eventually, rabies causes delirium, convulsions, coma and death.

Diagnosis

A patient is suspected to be suffering from rabies if there is a history of an animal bite. Clinical diagnosis is difficult unless rabies-specific signs appear. Generally, several tests are necessary to diagnose rabies ante-mortem (before death) in humans.

Prevention

Don't handle any domestic animal unless you are certain it does not have rabies. Never handle wild animals and keep your distance from them.

Rabies vaccination

In rabies-affected countries, *pre-exposure vaccination* is often recommended for expatriates and long-term visitors - especially if they will not be able to get quality medical care after being bitten or scratched by an animal. It is especially important for children, since they may not tell their parents that they have been bitten or scratched. The vaccine is usually given in your home country prior to travel, in a series of two injections (days 0 and 7).

Post-exposure vaccination is used after someone has interacted with an animal that may be rabid. It must be given soon after the bite or scratch, and can be life saving.

Following a bite or scratch or lick (on broken skin) by an animal:

- Immediately clean 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 to assess the need for rabies *post-exposure vaccination*, even if you have had pre-exposure vaccination. (THIS CAN BE LIFE SAVING).

For people who **did NOT** have a pre-exposure vaccination:

- Rabies immunoglobulin (RIG) is injected into and around the wounds
- Four doses of rabies vaccine are required, given on days 0, 3, 7 and 14 (or days 0, 3, 7, 14 and 28).

For people who **DID** have a pre-exposure vaccination:

- Two doses of rabies vaccine are required (given on days 0 and 3).
- Rabies immunoglobulin (RIG) is **not** required.

Risk to travellers

Rabies is found on all continents except Antarctica. Worldwide, most cases of human rabies occur in Asia, Africa and Latin America, in places that have large numbers of stray dogs. People living in rural areas, especially children are at higher risk of dog bites. Certain activities, such as cycling and running, can raise your risk of being chased and bitten by a dog.

[WHO information on rabies](#)
[CDC](#)

Tickborne encephalitis

Recommended for:

- people who will spend time in forested or grassy areas during tick season (particularly those who will hike, camp, perform fieldwork, etc.);
- people residing in this country for longer periods (i.e., six months or more).

Tickborne encephalitis (TBE) is a viral infection which is mostly transmitted to people through tick bites. Ticks live in or near forests and are usually active during warmer months. TBE infection can also be acquired by consuming unpasteurized dairy products from infected cows, goats or sheep.

Most people will not have any symptoms. For those who do, initial symptoms include fever, headache, muscle aches, nausea, and fatigue. These may resolve in a week or so, but if the infection spreads to the brain, the symptoms may become more severe (decreased mental state, severe headaches, convulsions, weakness and/or coma). TBE can be fatal.

Prevention is through avoiding tick bites and vaccination.

The Disease

Tickborne encephalitis (TBE) is a viral infection which is mostly transmitted to people through tick bites. It occurs in many areas of Europe and Asia.

Transmission

These viruses are mainly transmitted to humans by the bite of an infected tick. Ticks are usually found in forests, long grass and hedges and are more active between early spring and late autumn. Often, the bite goes unnoticed. Infection can also be acquired by consuming unpasteurized dairy products from infected cows, goats or sheep.

Symptoms

Many people have no symptoms. If symptoms do develop, they first start about 7 to 14 days after the tick bite. Initially there may be fever, headache, muscle aches, nausea and fatigue. These symptoms usually resolve in a week or so, but up to one third of people go on to a second phase of illness with inflammation of the brain and spinal cord. Symptoms then include

severe headaches, decreased mental state, convulsions, and muscle paralysis. Recovery takes months and there may be long-term brain and nervous system damage. TBE can be fatal.

Diagnosis

The disease can only be diagnosed through laboratory tests.

Treatment

There is no specific medication to treat TBE. Patients are managed with supportive treatment.

Prevention

Avoid tick bites:

- Wear long pants with tight cuffs, and tuck pant legs into socks.
- Use insect repellent containing DEET, picaridin, IR3535, Oil of Lemon Eucalyptus (OLE), para-menthane-diol (PMD), or 2-undecanone.
- Consider soaking or spraying clothes with the insecticide permethrin. (Do not apply permethrin directly to the skin.)
- Look for ticks on the body and clothing, and remove them promptly.

Do not consume unpasteurised dairy products.

Vaccine

A vaccine is available in many countries. It is recommended for people visiting endemic countries during the warmer months (early spring to late autumn) and participating in outdoor activities. In countries where the disease is endemic, the TBE vaccine is often included in routine immunisation schedules.

Risk to Travellers

Travellers at increased risk of exposure are those going to endemic countries and whose itineraries include outdoor recreational activities (e.g., camping, hiking) or working in forested areas (e.g., farming, field research) between early spring and late autumn.

References

[CDC Tickborne encephalitis information](#)

[European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control Tickborne encephalitis factsheet](#)

[UK TravelHealthPro Tick-borne encephalitis factsheet](#)

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 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](#)

Yellow fever

A yellow fever vaccination certificate is **required** for entry for anyone ≥ 9 months of age arriving from a [country with a risk of yellow fever transmission](#), including people who were in transit for more than 12 hours in an airport located in a risk country. *(Discuss vaccination with your travel health professional well in advance of your trip. The certificate becomes valid 10 days after vaccination and is valid for the life of the traveller. Note that vaccination requirements may change at any time; check with the relevant embassy or consulate for your destination. Occasionally border authorities request a valid vaccination certificate although it may not be required under the official policy.)*

Yellow fever is caused by a virus spread through mosquito bites. The symptoms range from a mild flu-like illness to a severe haemorrhagic fever with organ failure. It is prevented through vaccination and preventing mosquito bites.

Vaccination provides life-long protection. It is only available through designated yellow fever vaccination clinics. They will issue a signed and stamped International Certificate of Vaccination or Prophylaxis (ICVP) which becomes valid 10 days after the vaccination, and is valid for the lifetime of the person vaccinated.

Many countries require proof of vaccination for entry. If proof is not available, authorities may deny entry, mandate vaccination or may monitor your health. Some countries require proof of vaccination when departing. Always check the relevant location guide, or ask the consulate or embassy for the requirements, several weeks prior to your trip.

[View Yellow Fever Infographic Poster PDF](#)

The Disease

Yellow fever is a potentially fatal viral disease spread through mosquito bites. It is classified as one of the 'viral haemorrhagic fevers' and occurs in certain countries in Africa and South America. As there is no specific treatment available, prevention through vaccination and avoiding mosquito bites is essential. Many countries require travellers to show proof of vaccination for entry.

Transmission

The virus is carried by certain mosquito species (*Aedes* and *Haemagogus*), which breed in and around homes, in jungles, or in both environments. People and monkeys can become infected through mosquito bites. When the virus spreads into urban areas, large outbreaks can occur if a significant proportion of the population is unvaccinated and not immune.

Symptoms

Some people never develop symptoms after infection. For those who do, the first signs typically appear three to six days after a mosquito bite. They often begin with a sudden fever and headache, along with flu-like symptoms such as fatigue, muscle pain, back pain, nausea, and vomiting. Most people recover within four days. However, in around 15% of cases, symptoms worsen within 24 hours of apparent recovery. This toxic phase includes high fever, abdominal pain, vomiting, and jaundice (yellowing of the skin and eyes, giving the disease its name). The illness may progress to haemorrhagic symptoms (bleeding) and organ failure. Between 20% and 50% of severe cases result in death.

Diagnosis

Diagnosis requires specialised laboratory testing of blood and tissue samples. Early detection can be difficult as symptoms resemble other diseases such as malaria or dengue.

Treatment

There is no specific treatment for yellow fever. Patients are managed with supportive therapy. In severe cases, hospitalisation and intensive care may be required.

Prevention

Prevention is through avoiding mosquito bites and vaccination.

Prevent mosquito bites:

- When outdoors, wear clothing that covers most of your body (long sleeves, long pants, socks, and closed shoes).
- Consider treating clothing with an insecticide. These are available as both soaks and sprays, and usually last through several washings. Always follow the manufacturer's instructions.

- Use an effective insect repellent that contains DEET, Picaridin, PMD, or IR3535. In general, the higher the concentration of the active ingredient in a product, the longer it lasts and hence the more effective it is. Reapply after swimming or excessive sweating.
- Stay away from mosquito breeding areas, such as stagnant water.
- Avoid using perfumes and wash off sweat as both attract mosquitoes.
- Consider using a bed net impregnated with insecticides.
- Ensure windows are covered with fly-wire. Use "knock-down" insect spray to kill mosquitoes in your room.
- Choose air-conditioned, well-screened accommodation if possible.

Vaccination: An effective vaccine is available. It contains a live, weakened virus and grants immunity to most people within 10 days, with 99% protection achieved by 30 days. A single dose generally provides lifelong immunity. There are precautions and contraindications to vaccination, and not everyone can receive the vaccine. Vaccination is only available through designated yellow fever vaccination clinics. Upon vaccination, travellers receive an International Certificate of Vaccination or Prophylaxis (ICVP), which becomes valid 10 days after vaccination and remains valid for life.

Proof of Vaccination for Entry and Exit Requirements

Many countries require proof of vaccination for entry—this applies to regions where yellow fever exists and those where mosquitoes capable of carrying the virus are present. If proof is unavailable, authorities may deny entry, mandate vaccination, or monitor your health. Some countries also require proof of vaccination upon departure.

Requirements are specific for each country and can vary depending on where the trip originated. Always check the relevant location guide, or ask the consulate or embassy for the requirements, several weeks before your trip.

If vaccination is medically contraindicated, a doctor must complete the "Medical Contraindications to Vaccination" section of the ICVP. A medical waiver letter may also be issued on official letterhead, signed and stamped by a doctor, specifying the reason for exemption. Waivers are generally issued for a single trip, and new ones may be required for future travel.

Risk to Travellers

The risk of acquiring yellow fever is higher in Africa than in South America, but the risk varies greatly according to location and season. In West Africa, peak transmission is late in the rainy season and early in the dry season (July–October). Transmission is highest during the rainy season (January–March) in Brazil. However, yellow fever can be contracted at any time of year.

[CDC Yellow Fever Information](#)

[CDC Yellow Fever Vaccine](#)

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

Anthrax

Anthrax is an acute infectious disease caused by the spore-forming bacterium *Bacillus anthracis*. It most commonly occurs in hoofed mammals, though humans can also become infected. The serious forms of human anthrax are cutaneous anthrax, inhalation anthrax and intestinal anthrax.

Symptoms of anthrax are different depending on the mode of infection. Generally, symptoms develop within seven days of exposure.

Cutaneous anthrax is a skin infection and accounts for 95% of all naturally-occurring anthrax infections. The main risk factor is contact with animal hides or hair, bone products, and wool. The disease can also be spread through contact with infected animals. Hence, the populations most at risk for anthrax include farm workers, veterinarians, and tannery and wool workers. Bacteria infects a person through cuts or abrasions on their skin. An itchy skin lesion, similar to an insect bite, then develops - usually within two weeks of exposure. This lesion may later blister and then break down, resulting in a black ulcer. The ulcer is frequently painless but surrounded by significant swelling. Sometimes painful lymph nodes may develop. Often, a scab forms, then dries and falls off within two weeks. In 20 percent of untreated individuals, the infection may spread through the bloodstream and become fatal. However, death is extremely rare among individuals who receive appropriate treatment. Initial symptoms of *inhalation anthrax* infection may resemble a common cold. After several days, the symptoms may progress to severe breathing problems and shock. Inhalation anthrax is often fatal.

Intestinal anthrax may follow the consumption of contaminated food and is characterized by acute inflammation of the intestinal tract. Initial signs of this disease are nausea, loss of appetite, vomiting and fever. These are followed by abdominal pain, vomiting of blood and severe diarrhea.

Direct person-to-person spread of anthrax is extremely unlikely; it may not even be possible. Therefore, there is no need to immunize or treat people who have been in contact with infected people unless they also were also exposed to the same source of infection (usually, a sick animal).

People who have been exposed to anthrax can take antibiotics to prevent infection. It is necessary to treat anthrax infections early; a delay lessens chances for survival. Anthrax usually is susceptible to penicillin, doxycycline and fluoroquinolones.

An anthrax vaccine can also prevent infection. Vaccination against anthrax is not recommended for the general public and is not available.

Avian influenza

Avian influenza (bird flu) is a group of influenza A viruses that usually occur in birds, but they can infect other animals and humans too. Most humans have been infected after direct contact with infected birds or contaminated environments. Bird flu viruses do not spread easily from person-to-person. The symptoms can range from a mild infection to severe illness and even death.

The H5N1 strain quickly kills domestic poultry flocks. When H5N1 infects humans, they usually become severely ill.

There is no commercially available vaccine for humans against avian influenza. Travellers are at relatively low risk of infection from avian influenzas. Avoid contact with birds and animals, cook food thoroughly and maintain high levels of hygiene to prevent the illness.

Hantaviruses

Hantaviruses are a group of viruses that belong to the *bunyaviridae* family. They can cause two different types of illness in humans: Haemorrhagic Fever with Renal Syndrome (HFRS) involves the kidneys while Hantavirus Pulmonary Syndrome (HPS) involves the respiratory system. Regardless of which illness they cause, hantaviruses are carried by infected rodents. Virus is present in the animal's saliva, urine and faeces. Droplets of these excretions can contaminate the air in a process called aerosolisation. Humans become sick when they inhale the virus.

The incubation period of HPS is not positively known. Limited data suggests that people become sick within one to eight weeks after being exposed to the virus. The incubation period for HFRS is usually 1 to 2 weeks after exposure but could be as long as 8 weeks.

Initial symptoms of HPS include fatigue, fever, and muscle aches. About 50 percent of HPS patients also experience headache, dizziness, and abdominal symptoms (nausea, vomiting, diarrhoea, pain). The "late stage" symptoms of HPS are cough/shortness of breath and a feeling of overall tightness in the chest. Heartbeat and breathing may both become rapid at this stage of illness. Symptoms of HFRS appear suddenly and include intense headaches, back and abdominal pain, fever, chills, nausea and blurred vision. As the disease progresses, patients may develop flushing of the face, inflammation, redness of the eyes or a rash. Later symptoms include bleeding from the skin, conjunctiva of the eye, and mouth. In the most severe cases renal failure develops.

There is no specific treatment or cure. Patients are treated supportively, meaning their symptoms are addressed even though the disease itself cannot be cured. Patients usually require hospitalisation in an intensive care unit. An antiviral medication, ribavirin, may be used to treat the HFRS although its effectiveness has not been proven in HPS.

There is no vaccine for HPS. Vaccines against HFRS are being used in many Asian countries. The best way to avoid infection is to eliminate rodents from your living space and worksite, and/or avoid contact with them. Keep food in tightly sealed containers, clean dishes immediately after use, do not leave pet food out all day, and seal holes to the outside – generally, make your environment inhospitable to rodents.

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.)

Rat Lungworm Disease

Rat lungworm disease (angiostrongyliasis) is a rare infection caused by the parasitic worm *Angiostrongylus cantonensis*. The worms live on rodents who excrete worm larvae, that then infect intermediate animals like slugs, snails, freshwater crabs, shrimps and frogs. Humans become infected by eating infected snails and slugs, either deliberately or accidentally.

Most people do not have any signs of infection or only mild symptoms. Symptoms include severe headache, stiff neck, mild fever, nausea and vomiting, and tingling or pain in the skin or extremities. A rare type of brain infection is possible. Diagnosis is difficult and usually made based on symptoms and history of consumption of slugs or snails in an area where the parasite is found. There is no specific treatment.

Prevention is through avoiding the consumption of raw snails, slugs and other small animals. This includes washing fresh lettuce and leafy vegetables to remove all snails, slugs and their slime.

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.

Japanese encephalitis

Japanese encephalitis is serious viral illness, spread by mosquitoes. It occurs in most of Asia as well as some parts of the Western Pacific, mostly in rural agricultural areas. Although many people won't have any symptoms, it can cause encephalitis (inflammation of the brain) with permanent brain damage, or be fatal. Prevention is through preventing mosquito bites. In addition, vaccination is recommended for travellers at higher risk.

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.

Lyme disease

Lyme disease occurs in North America, Europe and Asia. It is transmitted to humans by the bite of a particular species of tick. Lyme disease can cause an expanding rash at the site of the bite, fever, arthritis and nerve problems such as facial palsy.

To prevent tick bites:

- Avoid tick habitats
- Use insect repellents
- Check daily for ticks

Lyme disease vaccination is no longer available.

If you develop a rash at the site of a tick bite or other symptoms of Lyme disease, seek medical attention. A course of antibiotics can cure Lyme disease.

Scrub typhus

The bacterial disease scrub typhus is also known as tropical typhus or "chigger fever". Humans become infected when bitten by disease-carrying mites. A lump develops at the bite site. It ulcerates and forms an eschar (like a cigarette burn). Glands near the bite swell. Sudden onset symptoms progress, including high fever, headaches and sore muscles. About a third of those infected develop a rash.

Complications, such as pneumonia and nervous system impairment, can occur. Treatment with timely appropriate antibiotics will cure the disease. Untreated, mortality can be as high as 30 percent. No vaccine is available. Prevent infection by avoiding mite habitats (such as rodent infested areas, recently cleared forests clearings and rice paddies) and by preventing mite bites.

Tickborne encephalitis

Tickborne encephalitis (TBE) is a viral infection which is mostly transmitted to people through tick bites. Ticks live in or near forests and are usually active during warmer months. TBE infection can also be acquired by consuming unpasteurized dairy products from infected cows, goats or sheep.

Most people will not have any symptoms. For those who do, initial symptoms include fever, headache, muscle aches, nausea, and fatigue. These may resolve in a week or so, but if the infection spreads to the brain, the symptoms may become more

severe (decreased mental state, severe headaches, convulsions, weakness and/or coma). TBE can be fatal. Prevention is through avoiding tick bites and vaccination.

Tuberculosis (TB)

Tuberculosis (TB) is a serious bacterial disease. The bacteria can be coughed or sneezed into the air by an infected person. Most people who contract TB have had prolonged, close, exposure to an infected person. Family members, close friends and healthcare workers are most at risk. People with compromised immune systems, babies and children, those travelling to or living in countries with high TB rates, smokers and those who consume alcohol or other substances and those residing in group accommodation (such as prisons or nursing homes) are also at higher risk.

Active TB causes a variety of symptoms that are sometimes vague, but often include prolonged cough, chest pain, weakness, lack of appetite, weight loss, fever, chills, night sweats, tiredness, and lack of energy. Latent (inactive) TB causes no symptoms. Tuberculosis is diagnosed by evaluating a patient's risk factors for exposure to TB, clinical symptoms, chest X-rays, CT scan, tuberculin skin testing and examination of sputum or secretions which may contain the bacteria.

Most strains of TB can be treated with antimicrobial drugs. Up to four different types of medicines may be used together to treat a patient. If left untreated, active TB can be life-threatening. Some forms of TB have become resistant to drugs (MDR TB), and some forms are extensively resistant to drugs (XDR TB). These forms are hard to treat.

A vaccine, Bacillus Calmette-Guerin (BCG) is available. It protects children against severe TB. Some authorities recommend vaccinating children up to 16 years old or for travellers who may live or travel for three months or more to places with higher rates of TB infection or with the risk of multi-drug resistant TB. It must be discussed on an individual basis with your own health care provider.

Avoid enclosed or crowded environments where there are known TB patients, such as hospitals and prisons, whenever possible. People who must enter such places, such as health care workers, should wear specially fitted personal respiratory protective masks (such as the N-95 mask). Other ways to prevent the spread of TB include early identification, isolation and treatment of active cases, spreading awareness of symptoms to ensure people seek medical care early and ensuring that people on treatment take their medication and complete the entire course.

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.

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.

Schistosomiasis

Schistosomiasis, also known as bilharzia, is a disease caused by parasitic worms that live in freshwater lakes, rivers and rice paddies. It can penetrate the skin of persons who are wading, swimming, bathing or washing in contaminated water. There is no vaccine.

To prevent infection:

- Avoid swimming or wading in fresh water in countries where schistosomiasis occurs.
- Using soap during bathing *reduces* the risk of infection, as does a vigorous rubdown with a towel immediately after contact with contaminated water. Do *not* rely on these methods to prevent schistosomiasis.

- Heat bath water for five minutes at 50°C (122°F).
- Water held in a storage tank for at least 48 hours should be safe.

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

Yellow fever

Yellow fever is caused by a virus spread through mosquito bites. The symptoms range from a mild flu-like illness to a severe haemorrhagic fever with organ failure. It is prevented through vaccination and preventing mosquito bites.

Vaccination provides life-long protection. It is only available through designated yellow fever vaccination clinics. They will issue a signed and stamped International Certificate of Vaccination or Prophylaxis (ICVP) which becomes valid 10 days after the vaccination, and is valid for the lifetime of the person vaccinated.

Many countries require proof of vaccination for entry. If proof is not available, authorities may deny entry, mandate vaccination or may monitor your health. Some countries require proof of vaccination when departing. Always check the relevant location guide, or ask the consulate or embassy for the requirements, several weeks prior to your trip.

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.

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 unsterile water.
-

Rabies

Avoid domestic and wild animals and bats

Rabies

Rabies is endemic among dogs in China. Very few of them are vaccinated against the disease. China has a high number of stray dogs, including an estimated over 100,000 in Beijing.

Post-exposure treatment for rabies (immunoglobulin) is available in big cities but there may be a shortage of stock.

Destination Guide for China

Security Overview

Personal Security

STANDING TRAVEL ADVICE

- Travel to China can proceed with standard security precautions. However, some travellers may face increased scrutiny due to their organisational or personal profile and in-country activities. A comprehensive itinerary- and profile-specific assessment is recommended before departure. Contact our Assistance Centre for more detailed assessment and advice.
- Special permits are required for foreign nationals' entry to and travel within the Tibet Autonomous Region, as well as people's entry to certain border areas. The authorities may on occasion restrict travel to or within regions of China with little or no notice during periods of heightened tension. Contact your embassy prior to travel for up-to-date information on travel permit requirements.
- Ensure that the appropriate travel documents (visas, permits, passport with sufficient validity period) have been obtained. Contact the nearest Chinese diplomatic mission prior to travel for up-to-date information on immigration requirements.
- Ensure that official documentation is in order at all times. Carry identification at all times to expedite passage through security checkpoints. Copies of residence permits and the identification and visa page of passports should be accepted in most cases. A card in Chinese characters, not romanised form, is helpful.
- Register itineraries and plans with the respective national government traveller programmes, such as US Bureau of Consular Affairs' Smart Traveler Enrolment Program ([STEP](#)) or the Government of Canada's [Registration of Canadians Abroad](#). This is so that the government will have a record of the business travellers' passports and itineraries during their travel, can contact them and will be aware of their details should any complications arise.
- Take basic precautions, such as exercising healthy suspicion of strangers and avoiding ostentatious displays of wealth, to reduce the risk of falling victim to petty and street crime, opportunistic scams and confidence tricks. Confidence tricksters may target foreign nationals at entertainment establishments and tourist spots. Do not accept food or drinks from unidentified or recently met individuals unless accompanied by a trusted local host.
- Avoid all demonstrations as a routine precaution.
- Avoid discussing topics involving religion, political systems and areas concerning ethnic relationships in China.
- Officials can confiscate items considered to be detrimental to China's political and social stability, in particular material perceived to be linked to the above topics. These include undeveloped films, recorded material, publications and computers. Carrying politically sensitive material or engaging in political activism, or being perceived as such, may result in temporary detention and deportation.
- Anti-foreigner sentiment is possible during periods of heightened national sentiment, for example, during diplomatic disputes.
- Small-scale bombings, acts of arson and knife attacks related to business or personnel disputes are not unusual, though these are very unlikely to directly target foreign nationals. Report suspicious behaviour and packages to the authorities.
- Do not self-drive unless very familiar with local conditions. Road conditions and driving standards vary from urban to rural areas.
- Buses and other forms of public transport can attract pickpockets. Maintain vigilance over your personal possessions.
- Taxis are the safest and easiest way to get around. However, unlicensed taxis have been known to overcharge their customers. These include taxis that have been hailed at airports or hotels. Foreign nationals should use only a reputable taxi operator or book taxis through major hotels. All taxis are metered and people should ensure that the meter is on before commencing the journey.
- Research the performance record of Chinese domestic airlines and, if in doubt, seek additional advice regarding their suitability while making internal air travel plans.
- Information security and leaks of sensitive commercial data are issues in China. Business travellers should exercise stringent information security protocols, including the below (see Communications section for more details):
- Minimise the number of devices they bring into the country.
- Remove sensitive material on their devices.
- Exercise a high degree of caution before sending documents or information abroad that would fall under the coverage of China's state secrets law.
- Comply with local legislation.

Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region (XUAR)

- Travel to XUAR can proceed provided the traveller is locally hosted and a comprehensive journey management plan is in place.

- Carry identification to ease and speed passage through security checkpoints. Copies of residence permits, and the identification and visa page of passports should be accepted in most cases. Consider carrying a card stating your particulars in Chinese (in Simplified Chinese, not Traditional Chinese and not Romanised letters).
- Avoid engaging in conversations on sensitive topics such as domestic politics and human rights issues. Refrain from actions that may attract greater scrutiny from the authorities. These include engaging with political groups, local charities, and taking photographs outside tourist locations such as government or security facilities.

Crime

Limited to hot spots

CRIME

Petty crime, especially pickpocketing, bag-snatching and theft of valuables such as laptops and mobile telephones, occurs with some regularity and is the main concern for foreign business travellers. Such crimes mostly occur on public transport (particularly on buses and in train stations) and in crowded places such as markets, tourist and entertainment spots and shopping areas in major cities.

Confidence tricksters are also a concern for business travellers. Criminals use various scams, including the pretext of practicing English, to make money from victims. This is a particular concern in the main tourist areas of all cities. There are numerous reports of foreign nationals having been approached by strangers and offered a drink in a bar or a tea house, and then being presented with an inflated bill.

Other common scams include foreign nationals being brought a different menu with inflated prices, the use of counterfeit cash and ticket touts. Failure to pay in some of these situations can result in physical intimidation by the staff. Additionally, there have been reports of strangers spiking tourists' food and drink prior to robbing them.

In recent years, incidents involving stabbings have occurred over personal grievances and underlying societal tensions, resulting in both fatalities and injuries. While there were incidents where foreign nationals were targeted, these incidents remain generally rare, as the majority of attacks tend to target wealthy local nationals.

Terrorism

Moderate indirect risk to foreign nationals

TERRORISM

There are occasional small-scale acts of terrorism linked to business or personal disputes. These types of incidents have occurred in places such as public buses, banks, government offices and shopping malls. In 2018, a man detonated a small bomb near the US embassy in Beijing. Such attacks are mainly aimed at expressing personal grievances and attracting international attention.

Domestic terrorism was most salient in Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region (XUAR), in the country's north-west, between 1990 and 2016. The security environment has improved following a series of security operations launched by the central and local governments. This has also been bolstered by tight surveillance and a regular heavy deployment of police officers in the region.

Nonetheless, foreign militant groups tied to the Eastern Turkistan Islamic Movement (ETIM), an Islamist extremist group founded in XUAR that perpetrated violence within the region and wider China, have demonstrated intent to plot further attacks in the region. That said, their capability of launching attacks within the region is limited and no notable attacks have been reported in the region since 2017.

Heightened security should be expected on key dates such as the National Day of the PRC, as well as around the National Congress of the Communist Party, which is held every five years.

Kidnapping

KIDNAPPING

Kidnapping does occur, though the majority of victims are local nationals or those visiting from Hong Kong (SAR) and Taiwan (China). Kidnap-for-ransom seldom involves violence when a ransom is paid, but several violent incidents have occurred. Short-term detentions of foreign nationals have also been reported in the context of commercial or labour disputes. There have been past incidents of kidnappers making videos of victims engaged in minor indiscretions to blackmail the victim into making a payment. Nonetheless, while isolated incidents continue to occur, high-net-worth businesspeople are overall at a relatively low risk of kidnap and extortion.

Kidnap is also used to resolve business disputes between Chinese people (often linked to criminal gangs) if the 'wronged' party is hesitant to involve the PSB (police). In these cases, kidnappers usually demand the outstanding debt is paid as the ransom. Southern China, particularly the Guangzhou-Dongguan-Shenzhen corridor in Guangdong province, is the worst-affected region for this kind of crime.

Social Unrest

SOCIAL UNREST

The authorities require activists to apply for permits before holding demonstrations. Because of the government's strict control, demonstrations with or without official permits rarely occur. Protests mainly relate to land disputes, forced relocations, environmental issues (projects that have possible negative impact on the health and welfare of local people), labour issues (unpaid salaries and poor working conditions) and local officials' alleged corruption or abuse of power. Strikes and protests triggered by labour disputes occasionally turn violent, with workers taking senior managers hostage or damaging company property. Workers often engage in threats or intimidation of managers. However, targeted acts of violence at workplaces are rare. In the past, demonstrations were usually confined to the vicinity of the company, government office or industrial zone in question, though protesters have shown a propensity to congregate in main squares and to block major roads to draw attention to their cause, resulting in some disruption.

However, protests are usually short-lived and swiftly contained by the police. While such disturbances very rarely threaten foreign nationals, people should avoid protests as a precaution.

Bilateral tensions between China and Japan resulted in protests in the past. A series of disruptive nationalist demonstrations took place in cities across China in 2012 over the disputed islands in the East China Sea (known as Diaoyu in China and Senkaku in Japan). No further demonstrations related to diplomatic disputes have been reported in the years since. Rather, social media campaigns, such as the online boycotting of some foreign retailers in 2021 over the disputable 'Xinjiang Cotton', are more commonly seen in response to such issues. Campaigns such as these are unlikely to pose physical threats to business travellers and international assignees.

Conflict

CONFLICT

China is involved in a territorial dispute with Brunei, Vietnam, the Philippines and Malaysia over the Spratly Islands in the South China Sea.

China is also party to the longstanding dispute over the Diaoyu Islands (known as Senkaku in Japanese) in the East China Sea, which are also claimed by Taiwan (China) and Japan. Regional tensions were previously heightened over the establishment of the Air Defence Identification Zone (ADIZ) in the East China Sea by the Chinese authorities.

China and India have also experienced tensions along the Line of Actual Control (LAC), the de facto boundary between the two countries. Troops from both countries engaged in deadly clashes in the Galwan Valley in 2020, which escalated to a military standoff. Confrontations were also reported in December 2022 in the Yangtse area, along the perceived LAC in Tawang district (China's Tibet Autonomous Region, India's Arunachal Pradesh state).

Cross-strait tension has also been increasing in recent years. While mainland China is determined to proceed with a reunification process with Taiwan (China), the government in Taiwan (China), led by the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP), has been pushing against it. Both sides have engaged in heated rhetoric and there has also been an increase in military activities by regional stakeholders around the island of Taiwan.