Level 1: Watch (Practice Usual Precautions)
Lunar New Year

The Year of the Monkey begins on February 8, 2016, and many travelers will visit Asia to celebrate the Lunar New Year. If you are traveling to Asia, plan ahead for a safe and healthy trip.

Every destination has unique health issues that travelers should consider. To find specific information about the places you are traveling, visit our destination pages. In addition to being up-to-date on routine vaccines, you will find vaccine and medicine recommendations, along with many other tips for safe and healthy travel.

What can travelers do to protect themselves?

Before your trip:

- Schedule an appointment with your health care provider at least 4 weeks before you depart. Talk to your doctor or nurse about vaccines and medicines recommended for your destination. Travelers who want to reduce their risk of seasonal flu should receive the flu vaccine at least 2 weeks before departure. See the Travel Clinics webpage for help in finding a travel medicine clinic near you.
- Consider travel health and medical evacuation insurance.
- Pack a travel health kit.

During your trip:

- **Choose safe transportation:** Motor vehicle crashes are the #1 killer of healthy US citizens in foreign countries. Read about ways to prevent transportation injuries by visiting the Road Safety page.
- **Reduce your exposure to germs:** Wash your hands often, and avoid contact with people who are sick. Read more about reducing your exposure to germs in the “Stay Healthy and Safe” section of the destination page.
- **Prevent mosquito bites:** Diseases spread by mosquitoes, such as malaria, dengue, chikungunya, and Japanese encephalitis, are common throughout Asia. Read more about ways to prevent bug bites by visiting the Avoid Bug Bites page. You may also need to take prescription medicine to protect against malaria or get a vaccine against Japanese encephalitis. Talk to your doctor or nurse about prevention steps that are right for you and your destination.
- **Follow food and water safety guidelines:** Eating contaminated food and drinking contaminated water can cause illnesses such as hepatitis A, typhoid fever, and travelers’ diarrhea. Read about how to prevent these diseases by visiting the Safe Food and Water page on the Travelers’ Health website.
- **Do not touch birds, pigs, or other animals, and avoid farms and poultry markets:** Bird flu strains, such as H7N9 and H5N1, are flu viruses that have been seen in China.

- **If you feel sick during your trip:**
  - Talk to a doctor or nurse if you feel seriously ill, especially if you have a fever.
- For more information about medical care abroad, see Getting Health Care Abroad.
- Avoid contact with other people while you are sick.

**After your trip:**

- If you are not feeling well after your trip, you may need to see a doctor. If you need help finding a travel medicine specialist, see Find a Clinic. Be sure to tell your doctor about your travel, including where you went and what you did on your trip. Also tell your doctor if you were bitten or scratched by an animal while traveling.
- If your doctor prescribed antimalarial medicine for your trip, keep taking the rest of your pills after you return home. If you stop taking your medicine too soon, you could still get sick.
- **Malaria is always a serious disease and may be deadly.** If you become ill with a fever either while traveling in a malaria risk area or for up to 1 year after you return home, you should seek immediate medical attention and should tell the doctor about your travel history.
- For more information, see Getting Sick after Travel.