Log in | Subscribe | Free trial | eNewsletter Sign Up | Blogs | Reviews | Events | Contact us

Search 6,163 articles   SEARCH

Would you like to set your industry as your home page? Click below

Construction   Manufacturing/engineering   Chemicals   Retail and distribution   Catering and leisure   Transport   Utilities   Public services   Financial/general services

Health

Safety

Professional Skills

Ask the expert: overseas travellers

Keith Rhodes   18 March 2016
Alcumus

Health, Safety

Question:
Our business is expanding overseas and it is foreseeable that employees will be travelling to Africa and the Middle East. We are compiling a policy to cover aspects of working abroad but would like advice on assessing and dealing with pertinent health issues.

Answer:
You should ensure all employees travelling for work take advice on the potential health risks associated with the countries visited. More broadly, there is general advice available on long distance flying and common hazards, such as sun exposure.

Advice on inoculation and other requirements for some destinations should be obtained at the outset of planning a journey. You must be satisfied the employee is medically fit for travel, complies with any health standards laid down for entry and has had any required vaccinations. Appointments with a GP or an occupational health service should be made at least six weeks before travelling, as some courses of vaccination may take more than a month to complete.

Employees concerned about their ability to travel should seek advice, and should not travel for work if their physician has advised against it.

Country specific advice is published by NaTHNaC, the National Travel Health Network and Centre, a UK government organisation that produces health guidance for travellers and healthcare professionals advising them.

iStock/mikkelwilliam

Information about healthcare abroad is also available on the NHS Choices and NHS (Scotland) websites. Check the **Foreign and Commonwealth Office travel information**. Circumstances can change rapidly – the Zika and Ebola viruses are good examples of this – so keep up to date with health advice.

In hot climates, it is advisable to avoid the midday sun, use a sunscreen and cover skin where possible with loose clothing, as well as wearing headgear for shade and keeping hydrated. Insects, especially mosquitoes and ticks, can carry a variety of tropical diseases. Avoid insect bites by covering exposed skin with loose, long clothing; and using permethrin impregnated nets, knock-down sprays in rooms and insect repellents.

Food and water can expose travellers to bacteria, viruses and parasites. Employees may need to observe strict food and water hygiene methods, including good hand washing technique, boiling or sterilising water and/or only drinking bottled water, and avoiding ice in drinks.

All animal bites require medical attention, even if the victim is vaccinated. Any bite should be thoroughly cleansed and medical advice sought immediately. If rabies is a risk, post exposure (bite) vaccination is required as soon as possible.

Some diseases acquired overseas become apparent only after travellers return to the UK. It is particularly important to see a GP for investigation into any feverish or diarrhoeal illnesses that develop for up to three months after a trip.

*Keith Rhodes is a senior consultant at **Alcumus Compliance**, a leading health, safety and environmental consultancy whose specialists develop tailored and workable solutions*

Health, Safety

Related Items:
Ask the expert: lone workers overseas
Ask the expert: dirty water innoculations
Issue: April 2016

Printer-friendly version

Post a comment

Your name

Subject

Comment *

- No HTML tags allowed.   More information about text formats
- Web page addresses and e-mail
  addresses turn into links automatically.
- Lines and paragraphs break automatically.

CAPTCHA
This question is for testing whether you are a human visitor and to prevent automated spam submissions.

Math question *

13 + 3 =

Solve this simple math problem and enter the result. E.g. for 1+3, enter 4.

Save   Preview

SUBSCRIBE   **FREE TRIAL**

- Unlimited access to more than 5000 articles
- Breaking news updated throughout the day
- Receive the magazine every month directly to your door

- One month's access to all online content
- Daily news reports
- Free weekly eNewsletter
- A complimentary issue of Health and Safety at Work magazine

View all issues

Health	Vibration	HSE	Violence at work
Asbestos	**Safety**	Lifting operations	Work at height
Asthma	Accident reduction	Lone workers	Work equipment
Chemicals (and COSHH)	Accident reporting / RIDDOR	Manual handling	Worker involvement / representation
Disability	Asbestos	Migrant workers	Workplace transport
Display Screen Equipment (DSE)	Behavioural safety	New and expectant mothers	Young workers
Drugs and alcohol	Chemicals	Noise	**Professional Skills**
Ergonomics (MSDs)	Confined spaces	Personal injury	Legal brief
Legionnaires' disease	Corporate manslaughter	Personal protective equipment (PPE)	Qualifications
Mental health	Directors' duties	Regulation	Training
New and expectant mothers	Drugs and alcohol	Risk assessment	Management skills
Noise	Electrical safety	Road safety	Webinars
Older workers	Emergency planning	Safe systems of work	Ask the recruiter
Risk assessment	Fire	Slips, trips, and falls	Ask the expert
Sickness absence	First aid	Training	Career path
Stress/bullying			

About us
Contact us
Advertise with us
Privacy Policy
Terms and Conditions

© Lexis Nexis. All Rights Reserved.

Contact details:

Quadrant House, Brighton Road, Surrey SM2 5AS | Customer Services 0845 370 1234

Partner sites:

The Environmentalist, Environment Jobs, IIRSM, LexisNexis, Taxation Jobs, Taxation, Tax Adviser, Tax Journal, PensionsWorld, Pay & Benefits, Criminal Law & Justice, New Law Journal, Law webinars