

Medical Information for Missionaries

This information is our advice and does not replace that of your doctor or the CDC/Travel warnings on the State Department's website about travel to Haiti. Decisions about vaccinations are up to you and your doctor.

Malaria- Malaria is spread by mosquitos and while we don't see mosquitos many seasons out of the year we recommend that mission groups obtain anti-malaria pills. These pills are typically taken for a couple weeks before, during, and a few weeks after the trip and will prevent malaria if an infected mosquito bites you.

Typhoid- While typhoid fever is rare, and spread through contaminated stool (which you shouldn't be in contact with) it is a recommended vaccine for travel in Haiti. There is both a pill and shot form. No vaccines are required for travel to Haiti, but vaccination against typhoid is recommended by the State Department. You may be in contact with sick children if your group travels to the Missionaries of Charity Children's Hospital.

Hepatitis A- Hep A is often seen in areas with no access to clean water and poor hygiene and vaccinations are recommended before travel to any third world country since these conditions are more prevalent. It is also most often contracted in early childhood. Our community has access to clean water and has not had issues with Hep A, but it is always a possibility and is a precaution that is recommended by the State Department.

Tetanus- Make sure you are up-to-date.

Cholera- Many people have concerns about Cholera in Haiti. While Cholera continues to be a problem for the Haitian people it is easily prevented and treated. Cholera is spread through contaminated water and all water used by children, staff, and missionaries is purified with a combination of boiling, filtering, and sometimes even bleaching. All food is prepared with purified water. Make sure only to drink and brush your teeth with the water that is designated for you, wash and sanitize your hands often, and follow the Cholera prevention protocol as explained by the staff.

One reason that Cholera has been so dangerous for the Haitian people is that many do not understand the importance of hydration for health or how to rehydrate a person when they have become dehydrated. Many people also do not have access to a hospital for IV fluids if needed.

We know how to prevent and treat Cholera and we also have access to a hospital if anyone should need treatment. Cholera is also expected to be in Haiti for at least the next ten years before it is wiped out. We need to pray for the end of Cholera in Haiti!