



# Yellow Fever Vaccine

## *What You Need to Know*

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*Deployment Medication Information Sheets (DMIS) are provided by the U.S. Army Center for Health Promotion and Preventive Medicine (USACHPPM). Written for soldiers and their families, they provide basic information on deployment medications that are intended as guidance only; consult your health care provider for more information.*

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### **What is yellow fever?**

Yellow fever is a viral disease. Symptoms evolve through three stages from a nonspecific illness with fever, headache, muscle aches, weakness, nausea and vomiting, through a period of feeling better to a severe illness with jaundice (yellow skin or eyes) and bleeding from the gums and gastrointestinal tract, which can lead to death.

### **How do you get yellow fever?**

Yellow fever is transmitted between humans by a mosquito and occurs only in Africa and South America.

### **Who should get the vaccine and how is it given?**



- Some countries have regulations and requirements for yellow fever vaccination that must be met prior to entering the country.
- Your health care provider will give you the vaccine in one injection. A single dose provides immunity lasting 10 years or more. Immunity develops by the tenth day. If risk continues, a booster dose is needed every 10 years.

### **What does the military require?**

The vaccine is required for military during deployment or travel to yellow fever endemic areas.

### **Are there any side effects?**

This vaccine has been used for several decades and generally is associated with few side effects. Less than 5% of those vaccinated develop mild headache, muscle pain, or other minor symptoms 5 to 10 days after vaccination.

### **Is there any reason I shouldn't get the vaccine?**

- Tell your health care provider if you've had any other recent vaccinations. Under almost all circumstances, the following people should not receive the vaccine unless the risk of yellow fever disease exceeds the small risk associated with the vaccine:
  - Pregnant women.
  - Persons who are hypersensitive to eggs.
  - Persons with an immunosuppressed condition, such as AIDS/HIV or leukemia.

In most cases, these people should obtain either a waiver letter prior to travel or their travel to an area with active yellow fever transmission should be delayed.

- Tell your health care provider if you're taking any over-the-counter or prescription medicine, especially steroids or prednisone.
- Use of cholera or other live vaccines at the same time may interfere with the immune response to each vaccine.

### What if I'm breast-feeding?

It is not known if the vaccine appears in breast milk. Consult your health care provider before breast-feeding.

#### **You can avoid getting yellow fever!**

- Get each vaccination as scheduled.
- In addition to vaccination:
  - Remain in well-screened areas, use mosquito nets, and wear clothing that covers most of the body.
  - For greater protection, clothing and bed nets can be soaked in or sprayed with permethrin, which is an insecticide licensed for use on clothing.
  - It is also important to consider the use of insect repellent when traveling in environments with biting insects. The repellent should be applied to any exposed areas of the skin. The most effective compound is DEET (N,N-diethyl meta-toluamide), an ingredient in most insect repellents.

**Be sure the vaccination is recorded in your medical record.**

### Where can I get more information?

- Health care provider at your military treatment facility.
- Military Immunizations web page: <http://www.tricare.osd.mil/immunization/vaccines.html>
- CDC Specific Disease web site: [www.cdc.gov/health/diseases.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/health/diseases.htm)
- See other Deployment Medication Information Sheets (DMIS):
  - DEET Repellent
  - Permethrin Treated Clothing

#### **DMIS Provided by:**

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