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**PACKING PREVENTION: BENEFITS OF FOREIGN TRAVEL VACCINES**

Imagine you’re traveling overseas for a vacation, visit with family or friends, on business, or a mission trip; what preparation would you take?

There’s one important thing travelers may not think about: What diseases are present in your destination? If you’re going to certain parts of the world, you may need additional vaccines to make sure you’re protected against diseases such as malaria, typhoid and yellow fever, for example.

You may also need to get Hepatitis A or B vaccines, too. The Hepatitis A vaccine is valuable in areas where sanitation may be poor. Hepatitis A can be contracted after consuming food or beverages contaminated with even tiny amounts of feces. The Hepatitis B vaccine can be important in some countries where medical care is not completely modernized. Travelers can become infected through transfusions with unscreened blood, as well as through unprotected sexual activity and injection drug use.

Catawba County Public Health provides a variety of vaccines that may be recommended or required for foreign travel as indicated by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). When you call for an appointment, a Communicable Disease Nurse will ask the location of travel and the age and health status of the patient, as well as review prior vaccination records. She will then determine what vaccinations are required and recommended for the area of travel and will schedule a date to administer the vaccines.

Travelers should make appointments for vaccinations as soon as travel plans are made. This gives time to make an appointment and ensure that the vaccines are administered early enough to be considered effective. Because vaccine shortages may sometimes occur, travelers should plan at least six months ahead for trips. For example, due to manufacturing challenges, the yellow fever vaccination (YF-VAX) will be unavailable from now until mid-2018. In the meantime, the manufacturer has worked with the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to make another vaccine for yellow fever available in the U.S.; however, it is only available at a limited number of sites.

Although most people are healthy enough to receive vaccinations, people undergoing chemotherapy and those who have an underlying condition should talk with their regular medical provider prior to receiving any travel immunizations.

Want to schedule an appointment for travel vaccinations at Catawba County Public Health? Travelers can make an appointment in the immunization clinic by calling (828) 695-5800.

Because travel vaccines are often not covered by insurance, travelers should expect to pay for their own vaccines. Current fees for Catawba County Public Health can be found at <http://www.catawbacountync.gov/phealth/immunize/fees.asp>.

For more information about travel immunizations for different parts of the world visit the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) <https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/>.

Catawba County Public Health promotes and protects the health of all Catawba County residents through preventive services, innovative partnerships, and community health improvement initiatives. For more information, please call (828) 695-5800 or visit [www.catawbacountync.gov/phealth](http://www.catawbacountync.gov/phealth).

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*“Leading the Way to a Healthier Community”*

