



# Travel Medicine & Pre-Travel Advice in General Practice

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# Travel Medicine & Pre-Travel Advice in General Practice

This session will cover:

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- The role of General Practice in educating and supporting patients prior to overseas travel
  - Key considerations when providing pre-travel advice and travel vaccines
  - Patient engagement strategies and tools to support informed patient decisions
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# International Travel Movements in Australia

There were **41.7 million** international passenger movements in Australia over the past year. (Based on airline data)

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# Travel-Related Health Risks

Travel medicine experts estimate that among 100,000 travellers to the developing world:

- 50,000 will experience some health problem while abroad.
- 8,000 will need to be seen by a physician.
- 5,000 will be confined to bed.
- 300 will be admitted to a hospital.
- 20 will require air evacuation.
- 1 will die while traveling abroad.





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# Barriers to seeking travel health advice

Some people may avoid pre-travel advice due to:

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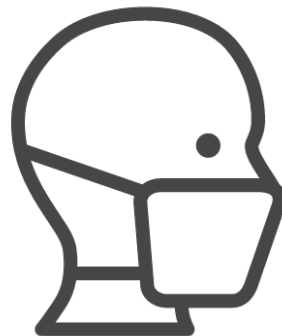
- Cost of consult and of vaccines
- Lack of time
- Unaware of/underestimate risk & consequences



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# Real cost of travel health misadventures

- Unpleasant and distressing experience
- Waste holiday time (even early return)
- Put family, friends, other travellers at risk
- Put people back home at risk on return



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The focus is always on safety, managing risk and making choices based on best available evidence

*What patients decide to do (or not do) is ultimately their choice*

As health professionals, we have a duty of care to ensure those choices are well informed

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# What is your scope?

## Levels of possible involvement



- Promote pre-travel health advice and offer straightforward support
- Administer catch-up of routine vaccines and some travel vaccines and travel-related products
- Refer complex cases to a specialist travel clinic
- In-depth consultation for patients with **complex** itineraries or multiple risk factors + offer full range of available travel vaccines

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# Key considerations of Travel Medicine

- **Specialised and complex** area of practice
- **Advice changes faster than most other areas in health** (e.g. outbreaks)
- **Health professionals must be aware of the fundamentals of travel medicine and stay up to date with the latest advice**



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# What travel medicine looks like in practice

## The 5 elements of a pre-travel consultation

1. **Risk Assessment:** what's the 'whole picture' of the patient in front of you
2. **Risk Communication:** discuss their risk, based on your assessment of their health status, itinerary, planned activities, etc.
3. **Risk Management:** Make a plan of action with the patient
4. **Records and documentation:** Make sure the paperwork is right, particularly if there's information required by customs/border security in certain countries (e.g. Evidence of mandatory vaccines, list of prescription medications, etc.)
5. **Post-travel advice:** What to watch out for on return (e.g. Fever if they've been in a Malaria endemic area.)

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# Essential questions to establish risk

## The 3 essential questions:

1. **Where are you going?** All destinations in travel itinerary
2. **For how long?** Greater length = greater risk
3. **When do you depart?** How long we have to get them ready

## How long before departure should a travel health consult be booked?

**For most travellers, ideally:** at least 6–8 weeks

**Moving to live/work overseas:** at least 6 months

**Leaving on short notice:** never too late!



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# High risk populations

- Pre-existing chronic condition
- Pregnant or breastfeeding
- Travelling with children
- Immunosuppressed travellers
- Visiting Friends & Relatives (VFR)





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# Be ready to answer...

## Common patient questions



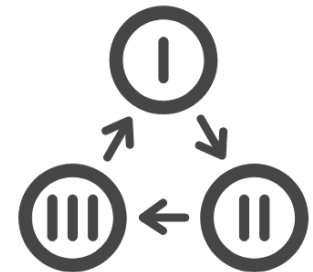
- Will I need **any shots** for my trip?
- **I can only afford 1** out of all these shots, which one is the most important?
- What are the **side effects**?
- **How long** until the vaccine ‘kicks in’?
- **How long** will I be protected for?
- **What paperwork** do I need to travel with? What will they ask for at customs?
- **I’ll have all the shots except the flu shot** ‘cause my mate said it gave him the flu
- **Can I have this shot** if I’m pregnant?
- **Can you write all that down** for me so I can remember it, please?

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# Managing risk with vaccination

## Vaccine selection:

- **Routine** vaccines  
e.g. Childhood & National Immunisation Program
- **Required** vaccines  
e.g. Yellow Fever
- **Recommended** vaccines  
e.g. Typhoid, Japanese Encephalitis, etc.



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# Some conditions/issues travellers may be at risk of

Diphtheria  
Influenza  
Measles  
Meningococcal Disease  
Mumps  
Pertussis  
Pneumococcal Disease  
Poliomyelitis  
Q Fever  
Rubella  
Tetanus  
Tuberculosis  
Varicella (Chickenpox)  
Coccidioidomycosis  
Cutaneous Larva Migrans  
Legionellosis  
Leptospirosis  
Melioidosis  
Pinworm  
Scabies

Typhoid  
Cholera  
Hepatitis A  
Travelers' Diarrhea  
Angiostrongyliasis  
Brucellosis  
Campylobacter Enteritis  
Cryptosporidiosis  
Cyclosporiasis  
Cysticercosis  
Giardiasis  
Helicobacter pylori  
Helminths, Intestinal  
Hepatitis E  
Norovirus  
Shigellosis  
Taeniasis  
Schistosomiasis  
Strongyloidiasis  
Viral Hemorrhagic Fevers

Toxoplasmosis  
Yersiniosis  
Rabies  
Anthrax  
Bartonella-Associated Infections  
Echinococcosis  
Histoplasmosis  
Plague (Bubonic, Pneumonic, Septicemic)  
Toxoplasmosis  
Japanese Encephalitis  
Malaria  
Yellow Fever  
Chikungunya  
Dengue  
Filariasis, Lymphatic  
Leishmaniasis  
Lyme Disease  
Onchocerciasis  
Rickettsial  
Tickborne Encephalitis

Hepatitis B  
Human Papillomavirus  
Hepatitis C  
HIV & AIDS  
Sexually Transmitted Diseases  
Motion Sickness  
Deep Vein Thrombosis  
Altitude Illness  
Jet Lag

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# Some conditions/issues travellers may be at risk of

Person to person, droplets, airborne, contaminated soil or swimming water	Diphtheria Influenza Measles Meningococcal Disease Mumps Pertussis Pneumococcal Disease Poliomyelitis Q Fever Rubella Tetanus Tuberculosis Varicella (Chickenpox) Coccidioidomycosis Cutaneous Larva Migrans Legionellosis Leptospirosis Melioidosis Pinworm Scabies	Contaminated food and water	Typhoid Cholera Hepatitis A Travelers' Diarrhea Angiostrongyliasis Brucellosis Campylobacter Enteritis Cryptosporidiosis Cyclosporiasis Cysticercosis Giardiasis Helicobacter pylori Helminths, Intestinal Hepatitis E Norovirus Shigellosis Taeniasis Schistosomiasis Strongyloidiasis Viral Hemorrhagic Fevers	Animal contact	Toxoplasmosis Yersiniosis Rabies Anthrax Bartonella-Associated Infections Echinococcosis Histoplasmosis Plague (Bubonic, Pneumonic, Septicemic) Toxoplasmosis	Blood, sex.	Hepatitis B Human Papillomavirus Hepatitis C HIV & AIDS Sexually Transmitted Diseases
					Japanese Encephalitis Malaria Yellow Fever Chikungunya Dengue Filariasis, Lymphatic Leishmaniasis Lyme Disease Onchocerciasis Rickettsial Tickborne Encephalitis		Motion Sickness Deep Vein Thrombosis Altitude Illness Jet Lag
			Mosquito, tick or other insect bite			Circumstance	

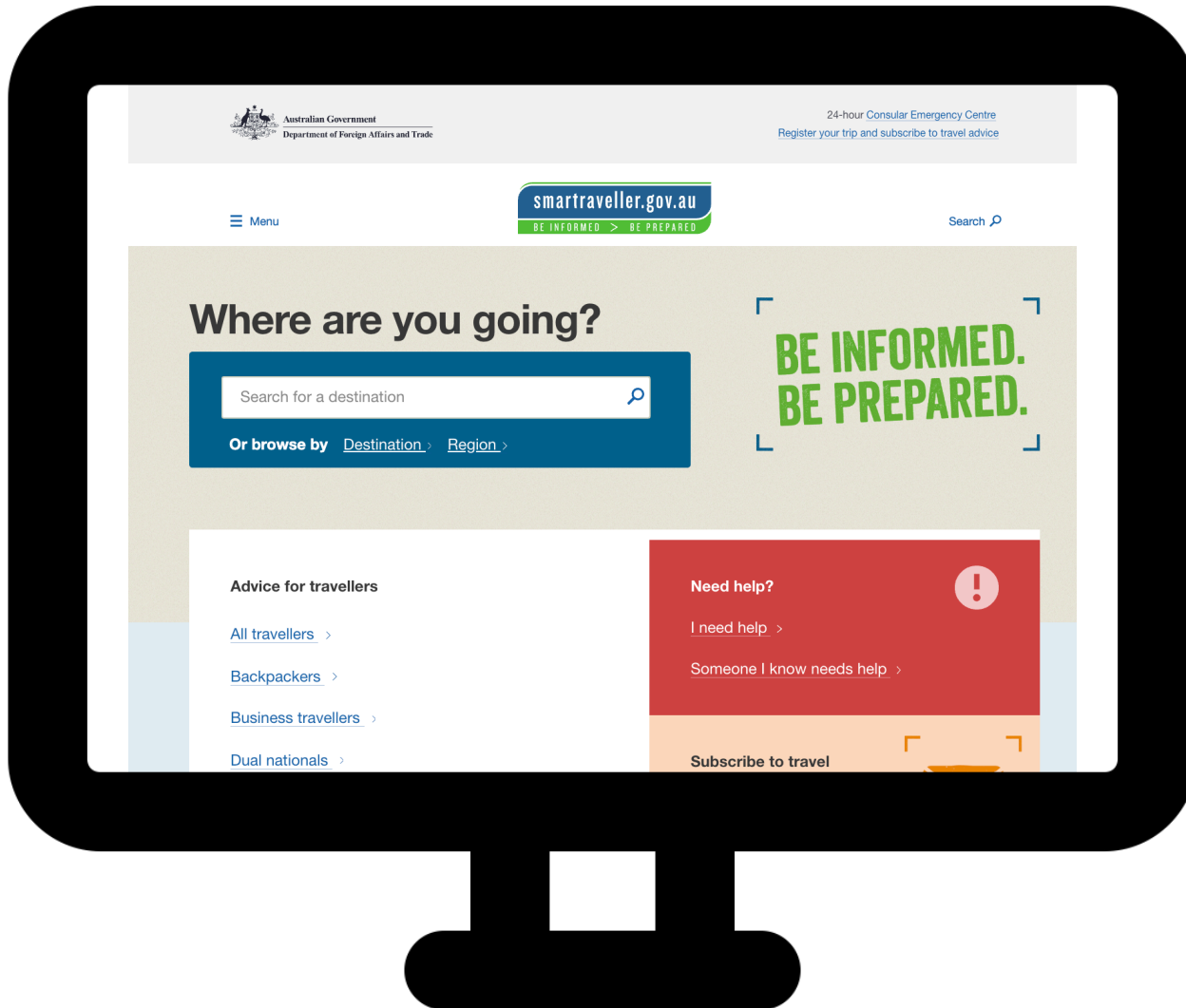
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**“... recommending appropriate vaccinations is not the only component of a pre-travel medical consultation...**

**There is no single ‘correct’ list of vaccines for travelling to any single country.”**

- The Australian Immunisation Handbook (10th Ed)

# Resources: smartraveller.gov.au



Source: Smartraveller by the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade.

<https://smartraveller.gov.au/Pages/default.aspx>

# Resources

## Australian Immunisation Handbook



Australian Government  
Department of Health

Australian  
**Immunisation**  
Handbook

### Vaccination for international travellers

All international travellers should be up to date with routine vaccines given in Australia.



**Check if the traveller needs any booster doses before they leave.**

Other vaccines can help protect against the following diseases:



#### Gastrointestinal

- ▶ Cholera
- ▶ Hepatitis A
- ▶ Typhoid



#### Zoonotic

- ▶ Rabies



#### Aerosols and droplets

- ▶ Meningococcal disease
- ▶ Tuberculosis



#### Insect-borne

- ▶ Japanese encephalitis
- ▶ Yellow fever

**Take a risk assessment approach and vaccinate based on the traveller's:**

**1**

health, age, lifestyle, occupation, and previous vaccines

+

**2**

travel itinerary

+

**3**

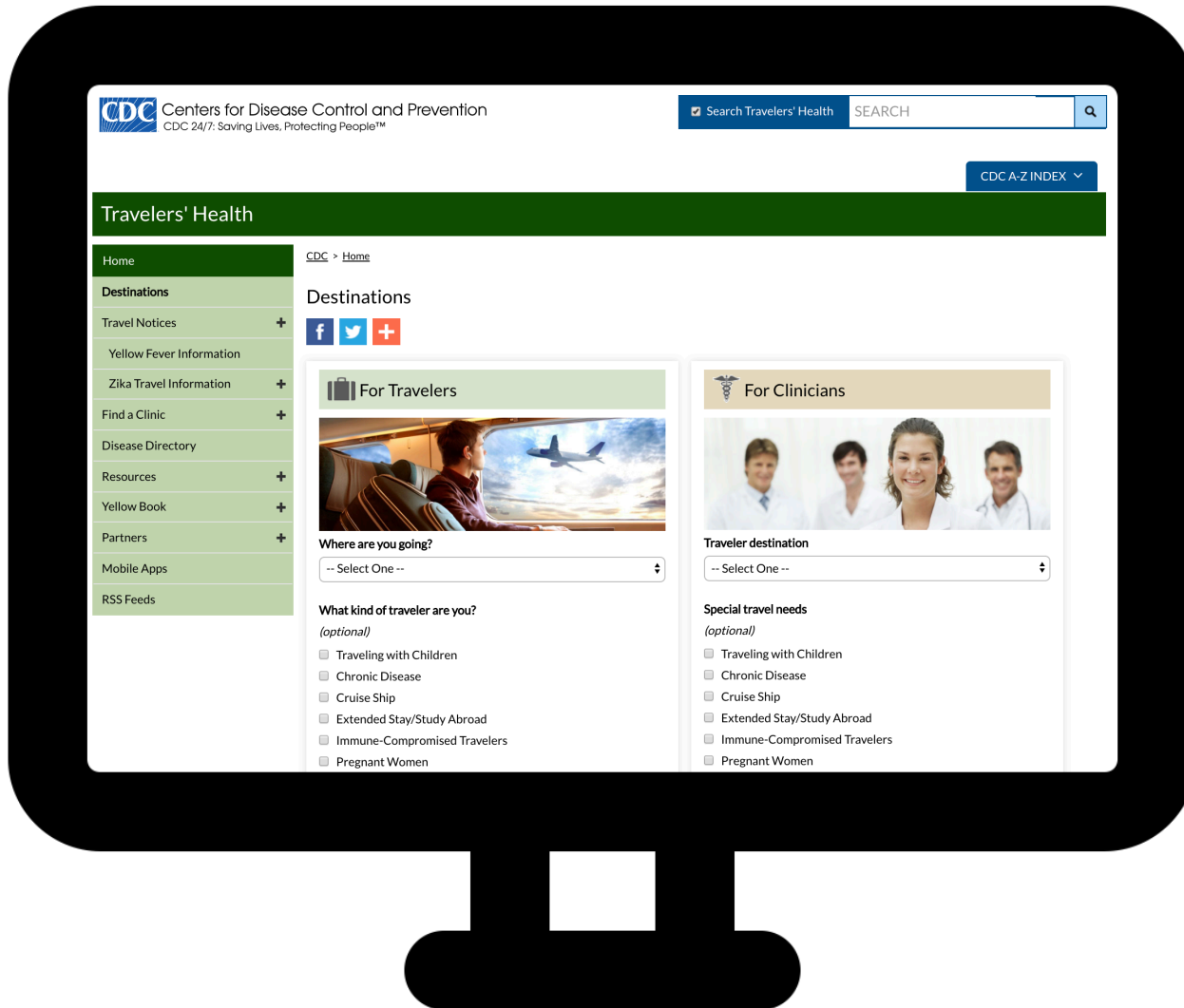
activities

=

likely  
risk of  
disease



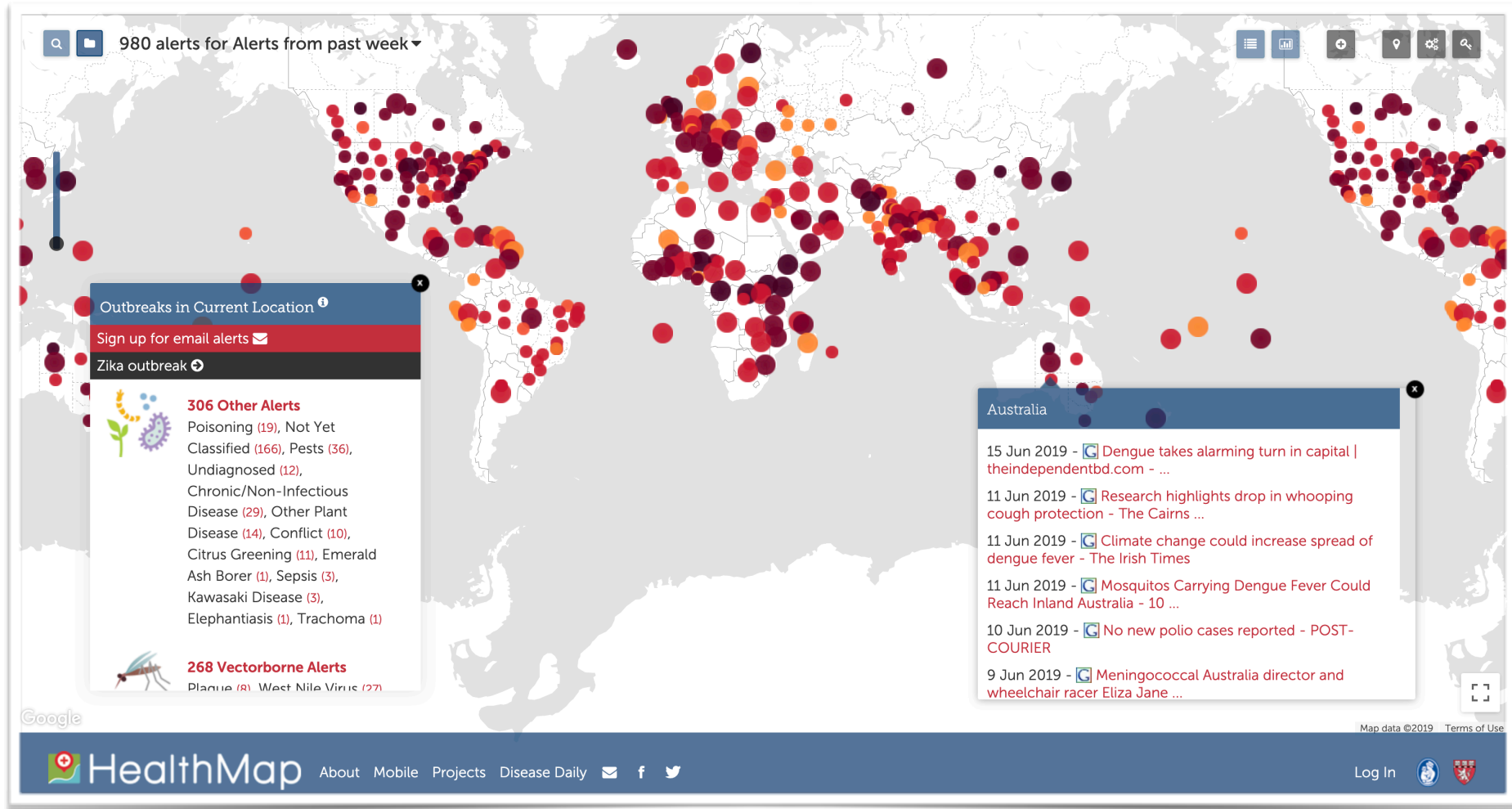
# Resources: CDC 'Destinations' Site



Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Atlanta, GA. USA

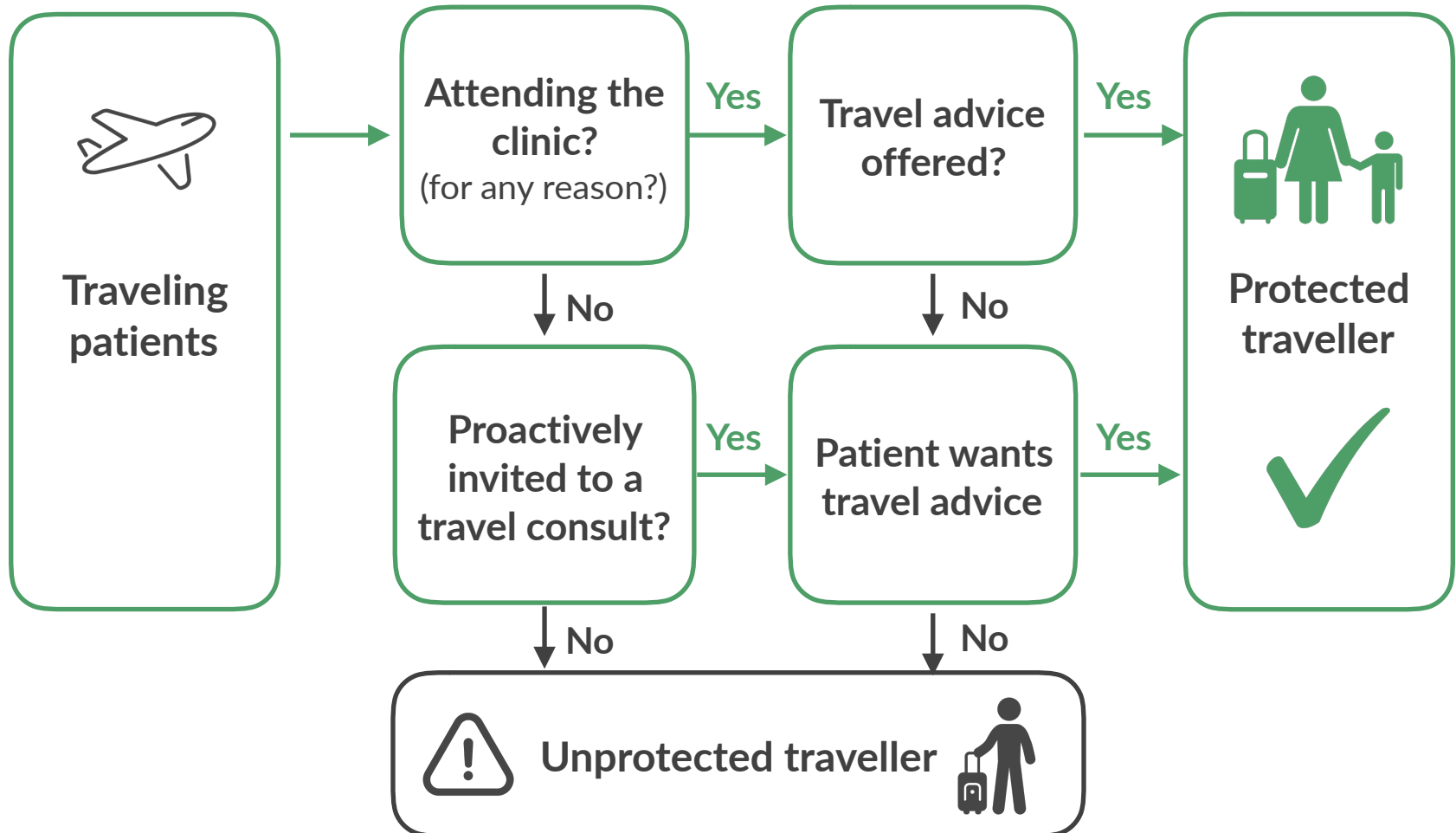
<https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/destinations/list>

# Resources: Healthmap.org



# Making an impact through your practice

## Intercept, inform and ready for travel



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# Promotion avenues

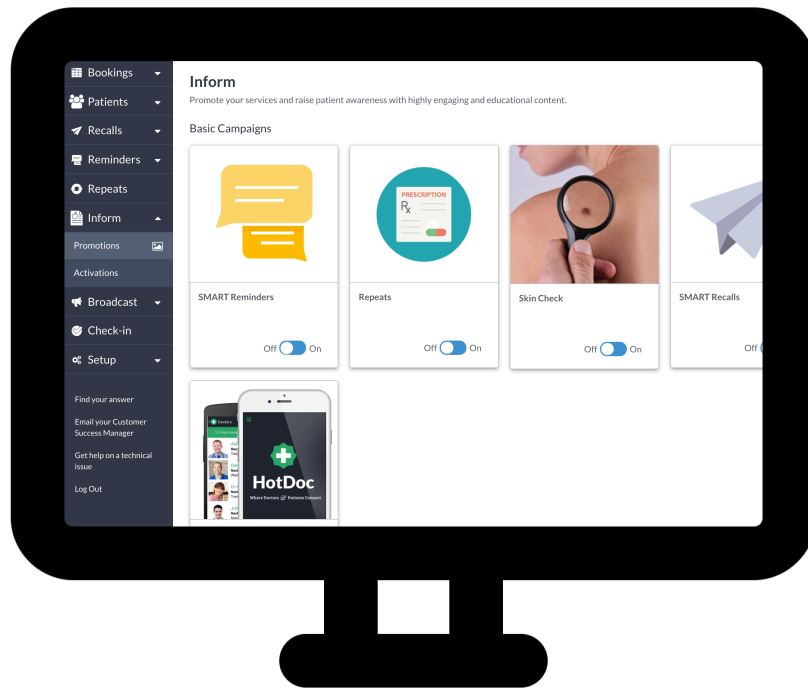
Educate and recruit patients for pre-travel advice through:

- Use a **poster** in the waiting room or a **sign** on a **digital display**
- Feature this service on your **practice website** and as part of your **on-hold message**
- **Practice newsletter** (if available)
- Use a **Facebook/social media campaign**, or even “**boost**” a post that talks about your travel clinic service. *(Target boost to nearby suburbs for best results)*
- Use a **HotDoc Inform Promotion** or **Activation** campaign

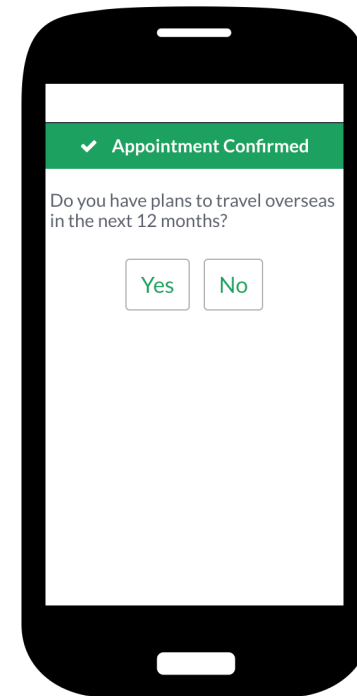
# Effective tools to help your practice

## HotDoc Inform Activations

### Dashboard



### Patient Message

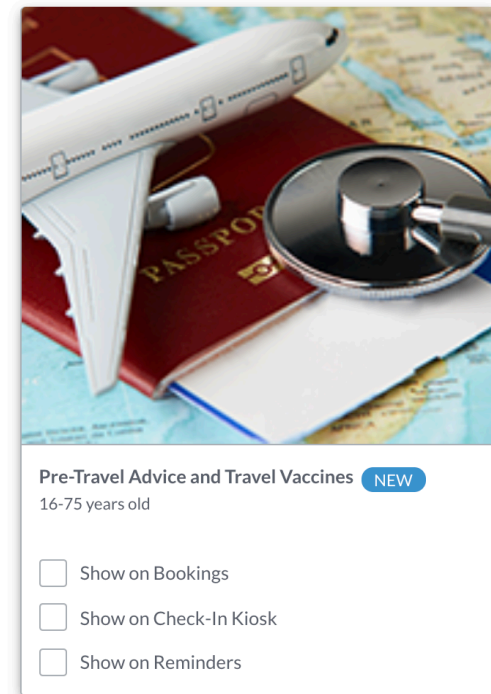
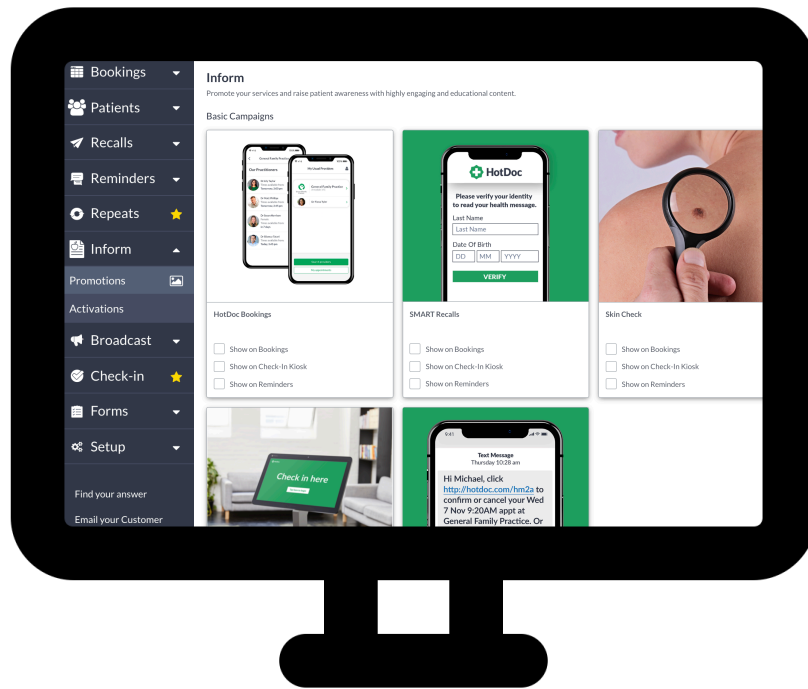


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# Effective tools to help your practice

## Inform Promotions

### Dashboard



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