

### What is Traveller's Diarrhoea?

Traveller's diarrhoea is a common, short lived but disruptive event in many travellers. It affects up to 50% of visitors to tropical countries. The common symptoms are diarrhoea, abdominal cramp, nausea, vomiting and lethargy. It is sometimes accompanied by fever or blood in the stool. The cause is due to the ingestion of contaminated water and food, especially with a bacteria called E Coli. If you experience a temperature, abdominal cramps and bloody diarrhoea, these characterise a more serious form of Traveller's diarrhoea and this needs to be treated with a Gastro Kit or local medical advice is to be sought.

### How to Prevent Traveller's Diarrhoea

Prevention: avoid eating and drinking contaminated food and water. Please see the page "Drinking and Eating safely" for some basic advice.

The Oral Cholera Vaccine protects against E. Coli - one of the common causes of diarrhoea in travellers. It is a drink, and is highly recommended.

### Treatment of Traveller's Diarrhoea

1. Rest if you feel tired or exhausted.
2. Drink plenty of fluids, at least 3 litres a day. The best replacement fluid is the oral rehydration solution like Hydralyte/Gastrolyte. If not available, one can use fruit juice or soft drinks diluted one part to four parts boiled water.
3. If you have to get on a bus, plane or tour, consider taking anti-diarrhoeal medication provided that the illness is mild. Suitable drugs include Gastro Stop. Never take these if you have blood in the stool, severe abdominal pain and high fever above 38 degrees Celsius. These drugs must not be given to children < 12 years or pregnant women.
4. If Diarrhoea persists greater than 48 hours or is accompanied by a temp > 38 degrees Celsius or bloody stools, follow flow chart included with Gastro Kit .

Sometimes diarrhoea will continue after returning home. If so see your doctor who will organise tests to identify the cause and give you appropriate treatment.

Gastro Kits are available from Travel Vaccination Health Care. They contain Gastrolyte, Gastro Stop, Maxolon, Azithromycin and Tinidazole.

*For more detailed information see our Travel Vaccination Health Care Book*

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