

Information for travellers: Yellow fever vaccination

Please read before the vaccination!

Yellow fever disease:

Yellow fever is a virus disease which manifests itself mostly as an acute disorder. It is communicated by certain mosquitos (e.g. the *Aedes aegypti*). At the beginning of the disease, influenza-like symptoms frequently occur. In the further course of the disease fever, internal haemorrhaging, jaundice and renal damage can result. In 10–20% of all cases, yellow fever ends fatally. Surviving the infection leads to life-long immunity.

Occurrence of yellow fever:

Yellow fever occurs in tropical Africa and in Middle and South America. Asia, Australia, Oceania and the Caribbean are yellow fever – free.

Yellow fever vaccination:

The highly efficacious and, as a rule, by healthy persons well tolerated yellow fever vaccination is administered with a so-called „live vaccine“, i.e. a small amount of weakened but still replication-capable yellow fever viruses are injected under the skin of the upper arm. In the days following these vaccine viruses are reproduced within the body, stimulating the production of antibodies by your immune system. 10 days after the vaccination you have lifelong protection against yellow fever.

During the first 2-7 days after the yellow fever vaccination, minor symptoms similar to those at the beginning of a cold can occur in around 5-10% of those vaccinated (e.g. fatigue, slightly temperatures, headaches or pains in the limbs). Slight reddening can occur at the injection site. These reactions are an indication of the efficacy of the vaccination. They show that your body is grappling with the vaccine.

Very seldom observed side effects:

In the case of allergies, particularly to eggs, general intolerance reactions, such as hives, swelling of the mucous membranes in the throat with shortness of breath and possibly even shock can occur. Late allergic reactions, with different skin manifestations or pain in the muscles and joints, as well as still more seldom depletion of the blood platelets (thrombocytes) with a tendency to haemorrhaging can occur up to two weeks after the vaccination in persons with a particular susceptibility to allergies.

In very rare cases, inflammation of the brain, cerebral membrane or a severe, yellow fever- like disorder of other organs can occur following the first vaccination. Overall, around 30 cases with severe side effects and 17 deaths are known to have occurred worldwide from a total of more than 400 million vaccinated persons. In Germany, no deaths have been reported up to now.

The risk of severe side effects following the first vaccination appears to be greater in older persons. Persons over the age of 60 should therefore be vaccinated only when a high, unavoidable risk of contracting a yellow fever infection exists.

If symptoms occur in close temporal proximity to the vaccination, which can be attributed to the vaccination, please consult your doctor.

Persons should not be vaccinated who:

- have contracted an acute feverish disease
- suffer from diseases of the nervous system
- have severe liver disease
- react hypersensitively to eggs or vaccine components
- are undergoing treatment for desensitization from allergies
- or in the event of immunosuppression (e.g. systemic cortisone therapy, radiation therapy or chemotherapy, thymus diseases, HIV infections with reduced immunofunction)
- during pregnancy and lactation
- infants less than nine months old

Please inform us if any of these conditions could apply to you!

Behaviour following the vaccination for a period of 10 days:

- Refrain from physical exertion (e.g. competitive sport)
- Exercise caution for the use of saunas and solariums
- Avoid sun baths
- Refrain from excessive consumption of alcohol
- Do not plan operations

For a period of four weeks:

- Do not donate blood!
- Avoid pregnancy

Consult your doctor for advice concerning the necessary waiting times before being given other vaccines.

The vaccine viruses are not transmitted to persons with whom you come into contact, i.e. for family members, e.g. pregnant women or small children living together with or encountering a newly vaccinated person poses no danger.

Duration of protection:

According to the World Health Organization (WHO) a single vaccine dose is sufficient for life-long protection against yellow fever. A booster vaccination after 10 years is therefore not necessary for travel to countries in which a yellow fever vaccination is a prerequisite for entering the country. Nevertheless, it is recommended that you check the regulations of the respective destination country, as not all such countries have adapted their entry requirements accordingly.

Apart from the fulfilment of the formal vaccination requirements, for travel to regions with a risk of contracting yellow fever, the prevention of the disease by the highly efficacious vaccine is meaningful and in principle recommended. In addition, you should also ensure effective protection against mosquitoes.

Impressum

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