

Yellow fever is a viral infection that can cause a flu-like illness with symptoms that include fever, chills, headache, malaise, lower back pain, nausea and vomiting. The illness can progress to more severe disease with jaundice, bleeding and kidney and liver failure. Yellow fever has a high case fatality rate. There is a risk of yellow fever transmission in tropical areas of Africa, South America, eastern Panama in Central America and Trinidad in the Caribbean. No cases have been detected in Asia, although the correct environmental conditions and mosquitoes for yellow fever transmission exist there.

**How do you catch yellow fever?**

Yellow fever is transmitted by the bite of an infected mosquito which feeds predominantly between dawn and dusk.

**Incubation period**

3 - 6 days.

**Diagnosis**

Diagnosis is by a blood test.

**Prevention**

Travellers should take steps to avoid mosquito bites. Yellow fever vaccine is recommended for people over 9 months of age who are travelling to or living in areas where there is a risk of virus transmission. A yellow fever vaccination and certificate may be required by certain countries as a condition of entry under International Health Regulations. The vaccine, which is highly effective, provides long lasting protection and is available from registered yellow fever centres throughout the UK. The yellow fever vaccination certificate, International Certificate of Vaccination or Prophylaxis (ICVP) is valid 10 days after administration of the vaccine although re-vaccination may be given at any time before expiry of the certificate and is effective immediately.

Side effects following yellow fever vaccination are usually mild and self-limiting however more serious reactions have been recorded. A careful risk assessment is important to determine whether the disease risk outweighs the possibility of vaccine related side effects. Where yellow fever vaccination is contraindicated on medical grounds, a medical exemption certificate may be provided, however travel to disease risk areas, without protection against yellow fever, should be strongly discouraged.

**Treatment**

There is no specific treatment for yellow fever. Hospitalization and intensive care may be necessary. Treatment is aimed at reducing the symptoms for the comfort of the patient. Immunity is lifelong in those who recover from the virus.



This information is produced by MASTA as a general guide to be used in conjunction with advice from your doctor or nurse. To obtain a health brief tailored to your journey visit a MASTA associated travel clinic or [www.masta-travel-health.com](http://www.masta-travel-health.com)