

Health Requirements and Recommendations for Travelers to Saudi Arabia for Hajj – 1445H (2024)

The Ministry of Health in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia issues this document to address health requirements and recommendations for visitors traveling to Saudi Arabia for the purposes of Hajj, or for seasonal work in Hajj areas during 1445H (2024).

1 Required vaccinations.

	Vaccine	Target Group	Target Countries	Approved Vaccine
1	Meningococcal meningitis	All individuals, 1 year old and above, arriving for Hajj or for seasonal work in Hajj zones.	All countries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quadrivalent (ACYW) Polysaccharide Vaccine, 10 days prior to arrival and should not exceed 3 years. Quadrivalent (ACYW) Conjugated² Vaccine within the last 5 years, and at least 10 days prior to arrival. Health authorities at the pilgrims' country of origin should ensure their vaccination within the required validity period and make sure that the type of vaccine and its date is clearly shown in the vaccination certificate. If the vaccine type is not indicated on the certificate, it will be considered valid for 3 years only.
2	Poliomyelitis	All travelers	States reporting cases of WPV1 or cVDPV1 (Appendix 1-Table 1)	At least one dose of bivalent oral polio vaccine (bOPV) or inactivated polio vaccine (IPV) ³
3	Poliomyelitis	All travelers	States reporting cVDPV2 positive human samples or Acute Flaccid Paralysis (AFP) cases (Appendix 1-Table 2)	At least one dose of (IPV) ³ , if (IPV) is not available, vaccination with at least one dose of oral polio vaccine (OPV) ⁴ is accepted.
4	Yellow Fever	All travelers above 9 months of age	Countries or areas at risk of yellow fever transmission (Appendix 2)	Yellow Fever vaccine. The Yellow Fever vaccination certificate is valid for life starting 10 days after vaccination.

¹ Makkah (the Holy City), Madinah, Jeddah and Taif

² Current evidence suggests that conjugate vaccines are safe and effective for those above 55 years of age.

³ it is recommended to get (bOPV) or (IPV) dose within the previous 12 months and administered not less than 4 weeks prior to arrival.

⁴ it is recommended to get (OPV) dose within the previous 6 months and administered not less than 4 weeks prior to arrival.

2 Recommended vaccinations.

	Vaccine	Target Group	Target Countries	Approved Vaccine
1	SARS-COV-2 (COVID-19)	All travelers aged 12 years and over, intending to perform or attend Hajj.	All countries	One dose of the updated Covid-19 Vaccine given in 1445
2	Poliomyelitis	All travelers	States reporting positive environmental sites samples of cVDPV2 (Appendix 1- Table 3)	At least one dose of (IPV) ⁵ , if (IPV) is not available, it is recommended to be vaccinated with at least one dose of the oral polio vaccine (OPV) ⁶
3	Seasonal Influenza	Travelers arriving to Hajj areas for Hajj, seasonal work or other purposes particularly pregnant women, children under 5 years, the elderly, individuals with chronic medical conditions (such as chronic cardiac, pulmonary, renal, metabolic, neurodevelopmental, liver, or hematologic diseases) and individuals with immunosuppressive conditions (such as HIV/AIDS, receiving chemotherapy or steroids, or malignancy).	All countries	Seasonal Influenza vaccine

3 Preventive Measures by Health Authority at Points of Entry

	Disease	Target Countries	Approved Vaccine
1	SARS-COV-2 (COVID-19)	All countries.	Comply with local preventive regulations and procedures required by the Public Health Authority, available online on the following link (https://covid19.cdc.gov.sa/). These regulations are continuously updated.
2	Meningococcal meningitis	Countries with frequent epidemics of meningococcal meningitis, countries at risk for meningitis epidemics, and countries with outbreaks of non-vaccine groups of Neisseria meningitidis (Appendix 3)	Administer prophylactic antibiotics at the points of entry if deemed necessary.
3	Poliomyelitis	States reporting cases of WPV1 or cVDPV1 (Appendix 1-Table 1) regardless of age and vaccination status.	Administer one dose of bivalent oral polio vaccine (bOPV) at points of entry to Saudi Arabia.
4	Yellow Fever	Aircrafts, ships and other means of transportation arriving from countries affected by Yellow Fever (Appendix 2)	Valid certificate indicating that disinsection was applied in accordance with methods recommended by WHO. They may be subjected for inspection as a condition of granting free pratique.
5	Zika Virus Disease and Dengue Fever	Aircrafts, ships, and other means of transportation arriving from countries affected with the Zika virus and/or Dengue Fever (Appendix 4)	Valid certificate indicating that disinsection was applied in accordance with methods recommended by WHO. They may be subjected for inspection as a condition of granting free pratique.

⁵ it is recommended to get (IPV) dose within the previous 12 months and administered not less than 4 weeks prior to arrival.

⁶ it is recommended to get (OPV) dose within the previous 6 months and administered not less than 4 weeks prior to arrival.

4 General Health Recommendations.

4.1 Physical Ability, Chronic Diseases and Health Education

Ministry of Health recommends authorities at pilgrims' countries of origin to consider that pilgrims are free from medical conditions that affects physical ability, this includes diseases that often disable the pilgrims from performing Hajj, which are as follows:

- Advanced renal failure requiring hemodialysis or peritoneal dialysis diseases.
- Advanced heart failure with symptoms evident at rest or with minimal physical exertion.
- Chronic pulmonary diseases requiring continuous or intermittent oxygen use.
- Advanced liver cirrhosis with symptoms of hepatic failure such as (ascites, disorientation or confusion, varices bleeding).
- Advanced neurological diseases that impair perception or cognition or with sever motor disability.
- Senile Dementia.

Pilgrims with chronic diseases are advised to carry documentation of their health condition, along with an ample supply of their prescribed medications, and to make sure these medications are in their original packaging.

Pilgrims are recommended to update their vaccination status against vaccine-preventable diseases. These include vaccination against Diphtheria, Tetanus, Pertussis, Polio, Measles, Varicella and Mumps.

4.2 Acute Respiratory Infections

All travelers arriving to Hajj areas for Hajj, seasonal work or other purposes are recommended to comply with following:

- Wash hands with soap and water or a disinfectant, especially after coughing, sneezing, after using toilets, before handling and consuming food, and after touching animals.
- Use disposable tissues when coughing or sneezing and dispose of used tissues in wastebaskets.
- Wear regular face masks when in crowded places.
- Avoid contact with those who appear ill and avoid sharing their personal belongings.
- Avoid visits and contact with camels in farms, markets, or barns, and avoid drinking unpasteurized milk or eating raw meat or animal products that have not been thoroughly cooked.

4.3 Food and Water-Borne Diseases

Authorities in Saudi Arabia do not permit entry of food with arriving travelers for Hajj except in properly canned or sealed containers. Travelers arriving to Hajj areas for Hajj, seasonal work or other purposes are recommended to observe the following:

- Wash hands before and after eating and after going to the toilet.

- Thoroughly clean and wash fresh vegetables and fruit.
- Cook food thoroughly and store at safe temperatures.
- Keep raw and cooked food separated.

4.4 Heat-Related Conditions

Travelers arriving to Hajj areas for Hajj, seasonal work or other purposes, especially the elderly, are recommended to avoid direct sun exposure while performing rituals and to drink sufficient amount of fluids. Countries are requested to provide education on health-related illness to their pilgrims prior to travel. Medications that can exacerbate dehydration (e.g., diuretics) or interfere with heat exchange may need adjustment by treating physicians.

4.5 Zika Virus Disease and Dengue Fever:

Pilgrims are recommended to take necessary measures to avoid mosquito bites during the day and evening, which include wearing protective clothing (preferably light-colored) that covers as much of the body as possible; using physical barriers such as window screens and closed doors; and applying insect repellent (as per the label instructions on the product) to skin or clothing that contains DEET, IR3535 or Icaridin.

5 Responding to International Health Events

In the case of a public health emergency of international concern, or in the case of any event subject to notification under the International Health Regulations (2005), the Ministry of Health will undertake all additional necessary measures in consultation with the WHO.

6 Hajj Medical Missions:

The Ministry of Health in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia requires the medical missions accompanying the pilgrims to comply with the following technical requirements:

- To have at least 1 physician per 1,000 pilgrims accompanying the mission.
- At least 20% of the accompanying physicians should be public health physicians.
- To have a valid medical waste contract with a certified local company that covers the entire Hajj season.
- Clinics should include at least one infectious diseases isolation room that meets Saudi Arabia Ministry of Health standards.
- Commit to reporting notifiable infectious diseases to the Saudi Arabian Health System using approved reporting methods.

7 Appendixes:

Appendix 1:

Table 1: States reporting cases of WPV1 or cVDPV1

WP1	cVDPV1
Afghanistan	Madagascar
Pakistan	Mozambique
	DR Congo
	Yemen

Table 2: States reporting cVDPV2 positive Human Sources samples or Acute Flaccid Paralysis (AFP) cases.

cVDPV2		
Nigeria	Côte d'Ivoire	Burundi
Tanzania	Guinea	Zambia
Kenya	Central African Rep	Burkina Faso
Chad	DR Congo	Mozambique
Yemen	Mali	Indonesia
South Sudan	Somalia	Niger
Palestine	Mauritania	Zimbabwe
Zimbabwe	Mozambique	

Table 3: States reporting positive Environmental Sources samples of cVDPV2

cVDPV2		
Egypt	Cameron	Sudan
Congo	Angola	Botswana
Benin	Algeria	Senegal

Reference:

Polio Eradication Organization report on 2 April 2024.

Appendix 2:

Countries/areas at risk of Yellow Fever transmission, as per the WHO International Travel and Health Guidelines, are:

Americas		Africa	
Guyana	Argentina	Ghana	Angola
Panama	Venezuela	Guinea	Benin
Paraguay	Bolivia	Guinea-Bissau	Burkina Faso
Peru	Brazil	Kenya	Burundi
Surinam	Colombia	Liberia	Cameroon
Ecuador	Trinidad and Tobago	Mali	Central African Republic
	French Guiana	Mauritania	Chad
		Niger	Congo
		Nigeria	Côte d'Ivoire
		Senegal	DR Congo
		Sierra Leone	Equatorial Guinea
		Sudan	Ethiopia
		Gambia	Gabon
		Togo	South Sudan
		Uganda	

Appendix 3:

Countries/areas with frequent epidemics of meningococcal meningitis and countries at risk for meningitis epidemics (WHO International Travel and Health, 2015):

Africa		
Nigeria	Ethiopia	Benin
South Sudan	Gambia	Burkina Faso
Rwanda	Ghana	Burundi
Senegal	Guinea	Cameroon
Sudan	Guinea-Bissau	Central African Republic
Tanzania	Kenya	Chad
Togo	Mali	Côte d'Ivoire
Uganda	Mauritania	DR Congo
	Niger	Eritrea

Appendix 4:

Countries affected with Zika and/or Dengue:

Asia			Americas	
Vietnam	Fiji	Bangladesh	Dominica	Anguilla
Papua New Guinea	French Polynesia	India	Dominican Republic	Antigua and Barbuda
Philippines	Laos	Indonesia	Ecuador	Argentina
Samoa	Marshall Islands	Maldives	El Salvador	Europa
Singapore	Malaysia	Myanmar	French Guiana	AL Bahama
Solomon Islands	Micronesia	Thailand	Grenada	Barbados
Tonga	New Caledonia	Cambodia	Guadeloupe	Belize
Vanuatu	Palau	Cook Islands	Guatemala	Bolivia
		Sri Lanka	Guyana	Bonaire
	Africa		Haiti	Sint Eustatius and Saba
	Ethiopia	Angola	Honduras	Brazil
	Gabon	Burkina Faso	Isla de Pasqua - Chelsea	British Virgin Islands
	Guinea Bissau	Burundi	Jamaica	Caiman Islands
	Nigeria	Cabo Verde	Martinique	Colombia
	Senegal	Cameroon	Mexico	Costa Rica
	Uganda	Central African Republic	Montserrat	Cuba
	Sudan	Côte d'Ivoire	Nicaragua	Curaçao
			Saint Vincent and the Grindins	Panama
			Saint Martin	Paraguay
			Suriname	Peru
			Trinidad and Tobago	Puerto Rico
			Turks and Caicos	Saint Barthelemy
			US Virgin Islands	Saint Kitts and Nevis
			Venezuela	Saint Lucia
				Saint Martin