

## Guest Editorial



**Dr. M. Viswesvariah**  
London

### TRAVEL & MEDICINE

#### AWAKENING TRAVEL SMARTNESS & PREPAREDNESS

The whole world is opening up again following easing of travel restrictions and the airports are brimming with passengers. Summer holidays are in the offing. We all know that travelling makes us happier, improves brain power, relieves stress and anxiety, is a confidence booster, broadens your horizon, mind and helps to learn new experiences, cultures, food and languages. Some want to get away from it all, others have itchy feet with wanderlust attitudes. While thinking about Holidays, train of thoughts and memories are reawakened with the other side of the coin, certain adverse situations during my professional career relating to this. A patient's family while on holiday abroad met with an accident leading to death of family head and his wife with multiple fractures necessitating immediate return through air ambulance which needed my extensive co ordination. Also several years ago one of prominent person's brother returned back following holiday in Africa and succumbed to Falciparum malaria due to not taking malaria prophylaxis. The group of high end medical professionals attending a BMA conference a few years ago in Russia returned home with Giardiasis. Recently a passenger with medications was denied entry in USA due to no supporting documents. These situations have taught us about certain precautions and preparations we need to ensure prior to travel. First and foremost is to arrange travel plans and preparations well in advance. In addition to checking Passport and Visa validity and Expiry dates, travel insurance including health cover ( to include air rescue if needed ) we need to look into requirements relating to vaccinations and malarial prophylaxis. Any special Vaccination requirement for unusual vaccinations like yellow fever, typhoid and Japanese B encephalitis, Hepatitis A and B etc need consideration. Malarial prophylaxis should include both against drug resistant and Falciparum malaria. Special Vaccination clinics are available for advice.

Any prescription medications should not be forgotten including extra supply to meet any unforeseen extension to the originally planned holiday. Doctor's prescription or a letter from G.P is better taken along with you in case proof is required at Airport check up. Adequate sun protection like sun lotions, creams, lip balm and appropriate clothing need no stressing. Oral rehydration sachets, adequate fluid intake in hot climates and diarrhoeal, travel sickness and allergy medications are worth taking along as a precaution. Diabetics are advised extra care in their management particularly overseas travel. Avoid street foods as much as practically possible. Adventure activities like mountain climbing, skiing, wild water rafting are at risk of accidents and injuries and hence anticipatory preparedness is advisable. DVT prophylaxis for long haul flights in vulnerable individuals like adequate fluid intake, anti embolism stocking, walking down the aisle from time to time and avoiding alcohol needs consideration. Aspirin



## *The Medical* **Bulletin**

---

has no value in DVT prophylaxis. Better to have next of kin details and local embassy details (is worthwhile taking) in case we need to approach them for any unexpected happenings. So in conclusion we all realise that the world is a book and those who do not travel read only one page. Travel is a healthiest addiction and travel therapy achieves you peace and is liberating. Travel broadens the mind. So considering all the positivities of travelling, one should not be complacent and not to follow " we will cross the bridge when we come to it "attitude and to be well prepared in advance to enjoy the full harvest of holidays. So why are you waiting, pack up your bags !

*Dr. M. Viswesvaraiiah.*  
*London*