



Westbury Group Practice

Advice on travelling during pregnancy

Travelling during pregnancy is usually possible but there are important things to consider. Always seek a medical check-up before planning your trip and again shortly before departure.

Travelling with airlines

Most airlines will not accept a traveller after 28–32 weeks of pregnancy and long airflights in the later stages can be very uncomfortable. The most risky times for travel are during the first 12–15 weeks of pregnancy when miscarriage is more likely and after 30 weeks when complications such as high blood pressure (pre-eclampsia) are more common.

Facilities

Ante-natal facilities vary greatly between countries and you should think carefully before travelling to a country with poor medical facilities or where there are major cultural and language differences from home. This could be important if you have health problems such as threatening to miscarry or going into early labour.

Illness during pregnancy can be more severe so take special care to avoid contaminated food and water and insect and animal bites. Avoid partially cooked meat, unpasteurised milk products and soft cheeses.

In some countries infections such as tuberculosis or meningitis can be spread from close personal contact with locals and these can be serious during pregnancy both to yourself and your unborn child.

Vaccinations and Malaria

It is unusual for vaccinations or malaria tablets to cause any special problems during pregnancy and there can be a serious risk to the baby if the mother becomes ill, for example with typhoid, hepatitis or malaria. However live vaccines are usually best avoided altogether and some others may be best avoided during early pregnancy. Further details should be obtained from your doctor or practice nurse. A good NHS travel website for further information is www.fitfortravel.scot.nhs.uk

During pregnancy extra attention should be given to deciding which vaccines are really necessary.

Some of the newer antimalarial tablets are best avoided and if these are necessary, then postponing the trip may be advisable because malaria during pregnancy can be very serious.

Records

It is important to get the 'all clear' from your own doctor or obstetrician before departure. Taking written records including details of your blood group are likely to be helpful if you need medical attention while away.

Insurance

Ensure your insurance policy covers pregnancy but remember insurance policies are only as good as the facilities available.