

Health Requirements and Recommendations for Travelers to Saudi Arabia for Hajj – 1444h (2023)

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 seasonal works in Hajj areas during 1444H (2023).

1 Required vaccinations:

Vaccine	Target group	Target countries	Approved vaccine
SARS-COV-2 (COVID-19)	All travelers for Hajj	All countries	https://www.moh.gov.sa/en/HealthAwareness/Pilgrims_Health/Approved-Vaccines/Pages/Outside-the-Kingdom.aspx
Meningococcal meningitis	All individuals, aged 1 year and over, arriving for Hajj or for work in Hajj zones ¹	All countries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quadrivalent (ACYW) polysaccharide vaccine within the last 3 years. Quadrivalent (ACYW) conjugate vaccine within the last 5 years. 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 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.
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)
Poliomyelitis	All travelers	states reporting cVDPV2 positive Human Sources samples or Acute Flaccid Paralysis (AFP) cases (Appendix 1-Table 2)	at least one dose of IPV ³ , if (IPV) is not available, it is acceptable to be vaccinated with at least one dose of the oral polio vaccine (OPV) ⁴ .

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.

Yellow Fever	All travelers above nine 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.
--------------	--	--	--

2 Recommended vaccinations

Vaccine	Target group	Target countries	Approved vaccine
Poliomyelitis	All travelers	states reporting positive Environmental Sources 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
Seasonal Influenza	Travelers arriving for Hajj or for seasonal work in Hajj areas 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

⁵ it is recommended to get (bOPV) or (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.

3 Preventive measures by health authority at points of entry

Disease	Target countries	Approved vaccine
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.
Meningococcal meningitis	countries with frequent epidemics of meningococcal meningitis, countries at risk for meningitis epidemics, and countries with outbreaks of non-vaccine groups of N. meningitides (Appendix 3)	Administer prophylactic antibiotics at the points of entry if deemed necessary.
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 on entry to Saudi Arabia.
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 to inspection as a condition of granting free pratique.
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 to inspection as a condition of granting free pratique.

⁵ it is recommended to get (bOPV) or (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 the physical ability and health conditions of individuals applying for Hajj. It also encourages to consider the high risk of infectious diseases in the elderly and those with severe chronic diseases such as advanced cancers, heart and respiratory diseases, advanced liver or kidney diseases, and senility.

Pilgrims or those arriving for seasonal work or any other purpose in the Hajj areas with chronic diseases, are requested to prove their health condition and the medicines they take, and bring a sufficient amount of these medicines 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 arriving travelers for Hajj or for seasonal work in Hajj zones are recommended to comply with following:

- Wash hands with soap and water or a disinfectant, especially after coughing and 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 a wastebasket.
- 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.

Pilgrims 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

Pilgrims, especially older individuals, 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.

Appendix 1:

Table 1: States reporting cases of WPV1 or cVDPV1

WP1	cVDPV1
Afghanistan	Madagascar
Mozambique	Mozambique
Pakistan	Malawi
	DR Congo
	Yemen
	Congo

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

cVDPV2		
Nigeria	Ethiopia	Algeria
Benin	Chad	Mali
Cameroon	DR Congo	Yemen
Central African Rep	Ghana	Somalia
Sudan	Mozambique	Niger
Indonesia	United states of America	Togo

Table 3: States reporting positive Environmental Sources samples of cVDPV2

cVDPV2		
Canada	Botswana	United Kingdom
Egypt	Côte d'Ivoire	Zambia
	Djibouti	Palestine

Reference:

Statement of the Thirty-fourth Polio IHR Emergency Committee, held on 2 February 2023 – WHO

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 with current or previous Zika virus transmission:

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
Africa			Guyana	Bonaire
Ethiopia	Angola		Haiti	Sint Eustatius and Saba
Gabon	Burkina Faso		Honduras	Brazil
Guinea Bissau	Burundi		Isla de Pasqua - Chelsea	British Virgin Islands
Nigeria	Cabo Verde		Jamaica	Caiman Islands
Senegal	Cameroon		Martinique	Colombia
Uganda	Central African Republic		Mexico	Costa Rica
	Côte d'Ivoire		Montserrat	Cuba
			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