



2014 World Cup in Brazil: Health advice for fans

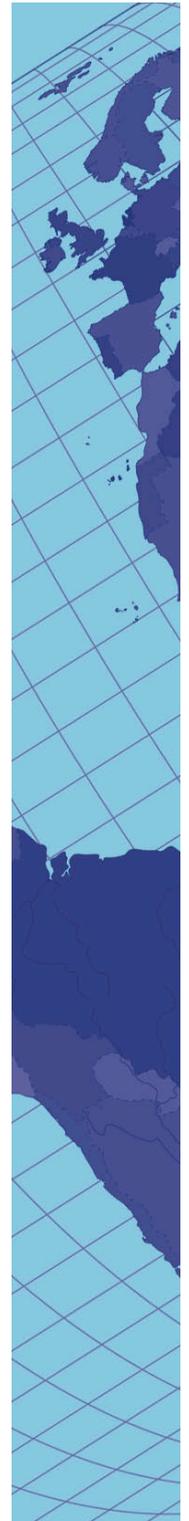
Anticipation is building for the FIFA World Cup 2014 in Brazil, if you are going, plan ahead for a healthy and safe trip:

Key advice:

- check NaTHNaC's [Brazil Country Pages](#) for vaccine and malaria advice
- see your GP, nurse or travel clinic for advice well in advance of your trip and remember to check you are up to date with your routine vaccinations
- get travel health insurance
- be safe—watch out for accidents, injuries and theft
- be SunSmart—protect your skin from the sun
- be responsible for your alcohol intake
- practice safe sex

The 2014 FIFA World Cup is being hosted by Brazil from 12 June to 13 July 2014 ^[1]. Brazil is a huge country, with a variable climate, so your health risks will depend on where you are going and what you are doing. Teams will be based in different parts of Brazil—there are 12 stadiums up to 2,000 miles apart. England's first match, against Italy, is on 14 June 2014 in the Amazon city of Manaus.

More information, including match schedules and advice on applying for tickets, is available on the official [FIFA website](#).



Before you go:

Do your research

Before you leave check for up to date information on the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) website for safety advice and travel requirements in Brazil.

Vaccines and malaria

Ideally, seek advice four to six weeks before you go. However, even if you are travelling last minute, it's still not too late to get advice; some vaccines can be given at short notice and antimalarial tablets, if needed, can be started just before travel, including on the day you travel.

Malaria is a serious, potentially fatal, illness spread by night biting mosquitoes. Antimalarial tablets are recommended if you are going to any Amazon areas. This includes the city of Manaus in Brazil. Travelling on to other South American countries could also put you at risk. Check NaTHNaC's Country Information Page for Brazil, and for onward travel, look at your destination's country page for any additional advice.

There is a risk of [yellow fever](#) in many parts of Brazil, so get advice on whether you need vaccine from a yellow fever vaccination centre (this vaccine can only be given by certified centres). A list of yellow fever vaccination centres is available at: [Designated Yellow Fever Vaccination Centres](#). Check you are up to date with all your UK vaccines, including MMR.

Travel health insurance

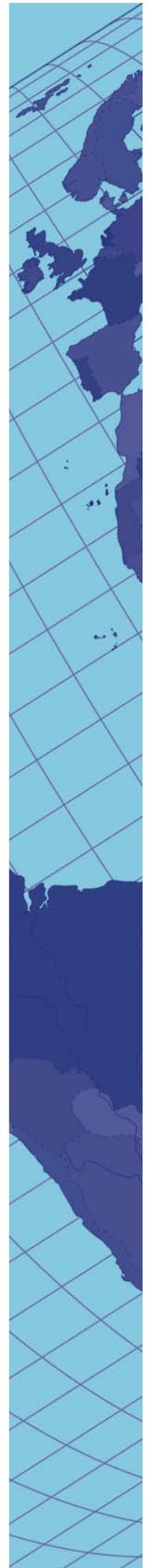
Brazil and the UK have no reciprocal health care agreement ^[2] so you must get comprehensive medical insurance (including cover for medical evacuation costs) before you go. Remember—tell your insurance company about any pre-existing conditions and medicines you are taking.

Medicines

Take a good supply of any regular medicines, as they may not be readily available. Fake drugs may be an issue, so it is always better to travel with your own supply of medicines. Advice on transportation of personal medication by travellers is on the NaTHNaC website.

First aid kits

You may want to carry a kit of first aid essentials, including sunscreen, painkillers, antiseptic, insect repellent and anti-diarrhoea tablets. These will be useful wherever you're going. If you are travelling to remote areas, consider taking a kit that includes basic sterile medical equipment such as needles and syringes. Then, if you need urgent treatment, you can ask your nurse or doctor to use this, as sterile equipment may not be available. These kits are usually available from travel clinics and larger chemists.



While you are away:

Food and water hygiene

Follow food and water hygiene precautions. Diarrhoea is common in travellers and could spoil your trip. Avoid dehydration by drinking plenty of water from a safe source (eg bottled) and consider buying diarrhoea self-treatment medicine from a UK chemist before you go. If you have bloody diarrhoea, a fever or cannot keep any fluids down, you need to get urgent medical help.

Avoiding insect bites

A number of diseases spread by insect bites, such as dengue fever and malaria, are common in Brazil. For some diseases, like dengue fever (an unpleasant, flu-like illness spread by day biting mosquitoes), there are no vaccines or drugs to prevent them, so avoiding mosquito bites is the only way to protect yourself. Follow good insect bite avoidance day and night: use insect repellents, cover up, and sleep under an intact mosquito net if you are not staying in air-conditioned accommodation. Remember, to prevent malaria, you may also need antimalarial tablets.

Rabies

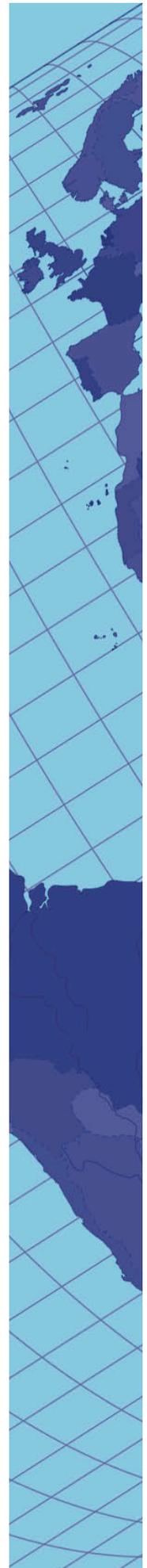
Rabies, a fatal illness spread by animals, is reported in Brazil. You are at risk if you are bitten, scratched, licked on open skin by any animal or if an animal spits in your face. Any animal, not just wild ones, but pets and domestic animals too, can have rabies, so you should avoid contact with wild or domestic animals. Following an animal bite, scratch, or lick, wash any wounds thoroughly with soap and water, and seek urgent medical advice.

Sun protection

June and July are winter months in Brazil, but the sun is still much stronger than in the UK. Temperatures can range between 15°C and 26°C ^[3]. Try to keep cool, seek shade, drink plenty of water and avoid excessive alcohol. Use an SPF 30 (UVA/UVB) sunscreen frequently, try to limit exposure and wear sunglasses, hats and protective clothes. See NaTHNaC's Sun Protection information for more advice.

Medical care

If you need emergency medical help, dial 192 to ask for an ambulance. Foreigners are entitled to emergency medical treatment in Brazil's public hospitals, but the public health system, especially in big cities, tends to be crowded. Private hospitals will not treat you unless you have proof that you can pay. Remember to contact your insurance and medical assistance company promptly if you are admitted to a clinic or hospital ^[4]. Both public and private health facilities in remote regions may be very basic.



Sex, body piercing and tattoo risks

Holidays are time to have fun but it's really important to protect your health while you are away. In nearly every case, condoms will help protect you against sexually transmitted infections (STIs) - so pack condoms and use one every time you have sex to avoid STIs and HIV, which are common in some parts of South America. Think carefully before getting a tattoo or body piercing while you are away, as unhygienic equipment can pass on HIV, hepatitis B and C. These serious infections can also be picked up through injecting illegal drugs.

Safety and security

Brazil experiences high levels of crime and violence, especially in big cities. Avoid secluded areas and poorly lit places, try to avoid going out on your own and be vigilant at all times ^[4]. Take care at matches and post game celebrations; be sensitive to your surroundings and alert to the risk of overcrowding.

Try to get immediate police and medical assistance if you are the victim of any kind of attack, including sexual assault. The FCO can help support you after sexual assault abroad.

Contact details for the British Embassy and Consulate Offices in Brazil can be found at: www.gov.uk/government/world/organisations/british-embassy-brazil

Road safety

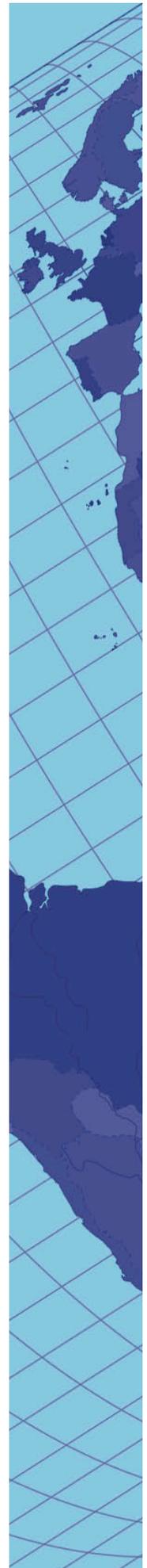
Brazil has a high road accident rate, and in many rural areas, road quality is poor. Avoid driving on unfamiliar and/or rural roads, especially at night. For more information, see NaTHNaC's advice on road traffic accidents during international travel. Brazil has a zero tolerance policy on drink driving; anyone drinking and driving is likely to be arrested and prosecuted ^[4].

Water safety

Never swim after drinking alcohol or taking drugs, check water depth before jumping or diving into a pool and get local advice about currents and tides before swimming in the sea. You are at a risk of a parasite called bilharzia (schistosomiasis) in Brazil, so freshwater swimming or wading in rivers, streams or lakes, is not recommended. Swimming in chlorinated pools and in the sea does not put you at risk of bilharzia.

Drugs

You are strongly advised not to engage in any illegal drug use. In Brazil, as with most South American countries, the legal penalties are severe ^[4].



When you get back:

If you have any symptoms, such as fever, flu-like illness, or persistent diarrhoea, you should seek immediate medical advice. Make sure your doctor knows you have been to South America. If you travelled to malarial areas, an urgent malaria test must be arranged. This is important, even if you took antimalarial tablets and have been home for a while.

If you had unprotected sex while you were away or think you might have a sexually transmitted infection, HIV or other infection, see your GP or go to a sexual health clinic as soon as possible.

References

1. Federation Internationale de Football Association (FIFA). 2014 FIFA World Cup Brazil: Almost 1.2 million FIFA World Cup tickets requested in the first 24 hours of sales. [Accessed 23 January 2014]. Available at: www.fifa.com/worldcup/organisation/ticketing/news/newsid=2241959/index.html
2. NHS Choices. Travelling outside the European Economic Area. June 2011. [Accessed 23 January 2014]. Available at: www.nhs.uk/NHSEngland/Healthcareabroad/countryguide/NonEEACountries/Pages/Non-EEACountries.aspx
3. Foreign and Commonwealth Office. World Cup 2014 Travel Advice. [Accessed 23 January 2014]. Available at: www.gov.uk/government/news/world-cup-2014
4. FCO Foreign Travel Advice: Brazil. 23 December 2013. [Accessed 23 January 2014]. Available at: www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice/brazil

Links

NaTHNaC: More information for travellers: www.nathnac.org/travel/

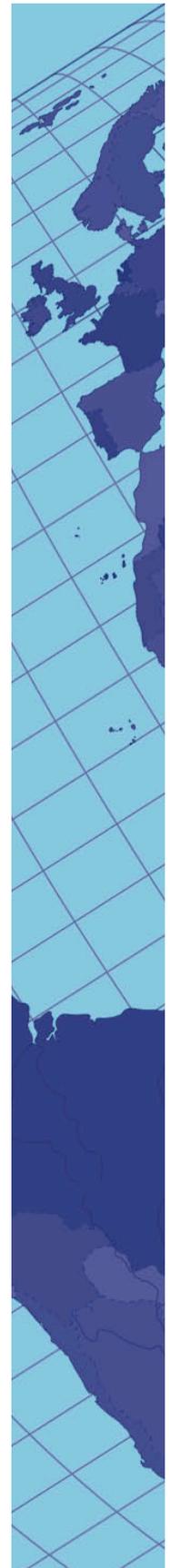
[FIFA: World Cup Brazil 2014](#)

[Foreign and Commonwealth Office: Plan your tactics before booking World Cup travel](#)

Foreign and Commonwealth Office: World Cup 2014 updates
www.gov.uk/government/news/world-cup-2014

[NHS Choices: Travel health essentials](#)

Have an enjoyable and healthy trip to Brazil for the World Cup and remember it for all the right reasons.



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