



# Health Awareness

## Traveler Alert: Get Immunizations Before Your Trip

(NAPSA)—Are you thinking of a sunny getaway to the Caribbean, Africa or South America? As you plan any trip, it is easy to think of only the exciting attractions, the fine dining, the sun-drenched beaches and the escape from the daily grind. Yet, you should also think of getting vaccines that will help protect you from diseases that may be common at your destination.

Twinrix® [Hepatitis A Vaccine (Inactivated) and Hepatitis B (Recombinant) Vaccine] is the only hepatitis A and hepatitis B combination vaccine available in the United States. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has approved an accelerated dosing schedule using Twinrix, which consists of three doses given within three weeks, followed by a booster dose at 12 months.

According to travel medicine specialist Bradley A. Connor, M.D., Past President, International Society of Travel Medicine, "This new vaccine dosing schedule will be helpful for last-minute adult travelers who are going to areas that are known to be at intermediate to high risk for both hepatitis A and hepatitis B viruses."

Hepatitis A and/or hepatitis B viruses are common in many areas throughout the world such as Africa, Asia, South America and parts of the Caribbean. In fact, hepatitis A is one of the most

### Understanding the Diseases

Hepatitis A infection is a potentially serious liver disease caused by the hepatitis A virus. Adults usually show symptoms, which may include jaundice (yellow skin and eyes), fatigue, nausea, fever, abdominal pain and loss of appetite.

Hepatitis B infection is a serious liver disease commonly spread by contact with infected blood or body fluids. Infection can become lifelong and can cause scarring of the liver, liver cancer, liver failure and even death.



common vaccine-preventable diseases encountered by travelers. Both hepatitis A and hepatitis B infections cause serious diseases of the liver. Severe infections can cause serious illness and even death. Vaccination is recommended for people at risk of infection who are traveling to areas where hepatitis A and hepatitis B viruses are common.

"Hepatitis A and hepatitis B are serious liver diseases which can be prevented through vaccination," says Dr. Connor. "Twinrix's new accelerated dosing schedule offers an option that could benefit individuals such as those preparing to travel internationally to high-risk areas."

### Preventing

### Dangerous Infections

Hepatitis A virus is commonly spread by close personal contact

and by eating food or drinking water contaminated with the hepatitis A virus. Hepatitis B virus is commonly transmitted through infected blood or body fluids.

"People at risk of exposure to these viruses should talk to their doctor about taking steps to protect themselves, including getting vaccinated," urges Dr. Connor.

### About Twinrix®

Twinrix is indicated for immunization against hepatitis A and hepatitis B viruses in persons 18 years of age and older.

As with all prescription medications, please talk with your healthcare provider to see if Twinrix is right for you.

In clinical trials with Twinrix, the most common side effects included pain and redness at the injection site, headache and tiredness. These effects were mild and did not last more than 48 hours. (See Adverse Reactions section of the Prescribing Information for Twinrix for other potential side effects.) As with any vaccine, there is a small risk of allergic reactions. If you notice any problems following vaccination, or if you are allergic to any component of the vaccine such as neomycin, yeast or latex, please inform your healthcare provider.

For more information, speak with your doctor, visit [www.travelsafely.com](http://www.travelsafely.com) or call (888) 825-5249.



**Note to Editors:** For complete Twinrix Prescribing Information, please visit [www.travelsafely.com](http://www.travelsafely.com). Twinrix is a registered trademark of GlaxoSmithKline. Manufactured by GlaxoSmithKline Biologicals, Rixensart, Belgium. Distributed by GlaxoSmithKline, Research Triangle Park, NC.