

Diseases screened through Sri Lanka Inbound Health Assessment Programme

Malaria

Malaria is a life-threatening infection caused by a micro-organism and transmitted by mosquitoes, from infected humans to others. The disease is common in most tropical countries of the world, including South Asia. However, Sri Lanka has been successful in combating the disease and has stopped the internal transmission and the occurrence of new cases within the country since October 2012. Therefore, the Government of Sri Lanka is very keen to prevent the reintroduction of Malaria to the country.

In the current health assessment, you will need to undergo the Malaria Rapid Diagnostic Test (RDT), which is a blood investigation, and if found to be positive, you will need to undergo treatment.

- You may not have any symptoms of malaria (e.g. fever, headache), but still you will be carrying the malaria parasites within your body
- Presence of the parasite in your body means you are likely to transmit the disease through a mosquito to other healthy people

As per the rules of the Government of Sri Lanka, it is compulsory for you to get admitted to a hospital with required facilities to start anti-malaria treatment and you have to take inward treatment for three days or more.

If admitted to a government hospital, you are eligible for free admission and to get treatment for malaria free of charge. If you get admitted to a private hospital, services provided by the Anti Malaria Campaign (AMC) and the Government of Sri Lanka (Anti-malarial drugs, investigations for malaria) will be free of charge. However, you may have to bare all other hospitalization related charges.

It is important to note that:

- Drugs to treat malaria are not available in outside pharmacies or Out Patient Department of hospitals in Sri Lanka
- Please don't use any anti-malarial drugs with you which you may have already brought
- Complete cure can be achieved by taking a full course of treatment from hospital

All the malaria patients identified in Sri Lanka are followed up and screened for their malaria status up to 42 days to one year (depend on the type of malaria). Therefore, you are required to give all the information required to contact you and to visit you personally by our staff.

You are advised to attend to the nearest health institution (AMC Headquarters, Regional Malaria Officer (RMO) or government hospital) for follow up visits as mentioned in your diagnosis card. During your stay in Sri Lanka, if you develop fever at any time, get yourself checked for malaria from your nearest health institution.

If you plan to travel to malaria endemic country and come back to Sri Lanka, please collect drugs to prevent malaria from AMC Headquarters or nearest RMO office and use them as recommended. Also, please always practice following measures to prevent mosquito bites, while you are in such an endemic country.

- Use protective clothing
- Apply mosquito repellent cream/sprays

- Sleep under a mosquito net

Filariasis

Filariasis, also known as Lymphatic Filariasis or Elephantiasis, is a disease caused by a worm, which invades the lymphatic system of the human body, and causes long term disabilities and deformities. It is also transmitted by mosquitoes from infected persons to others. Similar to Malaria, this disease is also widely present in most tropical countries and Sri Lanka has successfully eliminated the internal transmission of Filariasis as well. Therefore, the Government of Sri Lanka is very keen to prevent reintroduction of Filariasis to the country.

If you are found to have the Filariasis rapid test positive, you will be considered as being diseased and treatment will be initiated. You will be referred to the Anti Filariasis campaign of the Ministry of Health Sri Lanka, and there, according to the national guidelines, treatment will be provided for 12 days period. At the same time, the diagnosis will be confirmed using a night blood film, done between 8.30pm and 10pm, when the filariasis larvae surface into the peripheral blood circulation.

You will not need to get admitted to a hospital, but will need to be on medication daily until the period of treatment is completed. All relevant medication will be provided to you free of charge from the government.

Following treatment, you will be reassessed one month later for the treatment response. If you are found to be positive at this reassessment, you will have to repeat the medication for a further 12 days, after which you will be assessed again. You will be contacted and further informed about this management schedule by the national anti Filariasis Campaign (AFC). Your fullest compliance for this management is highly recommended, for you to be completely cured of the disease.

HIV/AIDS

Commonly referred to as AIDS, it is a viral infection transmitted from diseased humans to healthy persons through sexual contact, contact with infected body fluids and sharing of Intravenous (IV) drug injection needles and syringes. It is currently a global pandemic, present in almost all countries of the world, and rapidly spreading among the population. However, Sri Lanka is having a low incidence of HIV/AIDS and the disease is currently under control with the activities of the National STD/AIDS Control Programme (NSACP) of the Ministry of Health, and therefore, they are strictly monitoring the situation to ensure no importation of external cases occur. Also, since AIDS give rise to numerous opportunistic infections due to the lowered immune status of the patients, Sri Lanka intend to minimize the importation of such opportunistic infections to the country as well.

If you are found to be positive for the HIV screening test, you will be referred to the Sri Lanka government National HIV/AIDS control programme, where you will need to undergo confirmatory tests for HIV/AIDS. If you are found to be positive, you will be registered at the NSACP and treatment will be initiated. All treatment, investigations and monitoring will be provided free of charge, and strict confidentiality of the patient information will be maintained. Your full compliance to the advice and protocols provided by the NSACP will be required, to ensure your disease is controlled and that your resident visa status is not affected.

Tuberculosis

Tuberculosis, also known as TB, is a bacterial infection which can occur in most places of the Human body, but if present in the lungs, can be infectious. It is transmitted by the airborne droplets from a patient with TB of the lungs (Pulmonary TB) when such a person coughs, sneeze, speak and spit. Most of the infected persons remain dormant throughout their lifetime; not requiring treatment but those who develop the disease needs to undergo long term medication for six months or more. TB is prevalent in Sri Lanka as well, but is maintained under control, while the severe forms of Multi Drug Resistant TB (MDR-TB) and Extensive Drug Resistant TB (XDR-TB) are quite rare. Therefore, the Sri Lankan health authorities are determined to prevent the external introduction of these severe forms of TB into the local population, and also prevent the increase in the burden of TB patients in the country.

If your TB screening with the chest X-ray film is found to be positive or suspicious, you will be referred to the National TB Control programme (NPTCCD), where you will undergo the relevant confirmatory tests if required and treatment will be initiated. In some cases of suspicion, the IOM will conduct the sputum collection for rapid test (geneXpert) / culture and confirm the presence of the disease. Here too, if found to be positive for TB, you will be referred to the NPTCCD for further management. All investigations and management will be free of charge and strict confidentiality will be maintained. You will be required to strictly abide by the instructions and protocols of the NPTCCD, to ensure you are cured of the disease and also that your resident visa status is not affected.