

Health Notes:

Sleep/jet lag: I always travel with a good set of earplugs (also good for shutting out noise at night at the hotel, like dogs barking, chickens clucking, sirens, etc), an inflatable neck pillow for sleeping on the plane, and medication to help me sleep (clonazepam or ambien from your doctor, or just benedryl. These medications will also help you sleep at the right time when you arrive, since your body thinks it's morning when it's time to go to bed). The more you can sleep on the two long legs of the flight over, the more rested you will be when you arrive. The time difference is about 11 hours, so it's like going nocturnal all of a sudden. Drink lots of water on the plane trip.

Malaria: Tanzania is a malaria-risk area. You should use the mosquito nets provided by the hotels, and you should use insect repellent. You might prefer bringing your own mosquito net and leaving it there for someone—the ones at the hotels are a little small and sometimes have holes. The mosquitoes that carry malaria are out from dusk to dawn, so you don't need to use repellent all day long. You should take one of the antimalarial drugs (see CDC website). Note that you have to start taking them before you go, and keep taking them for 4 weeks (depending on the medication) after you get back, so figure out how many pills total you will need and tell your doctor.

NOTE: Chloroquine is NOT an effective antimalarial drug in East Africa and should not be taken to prevent malaria in this region.

For specific information, see the Center for Disease Control's website:

<http://www.cdc.gov/travel/regionalmalaria/eafrica.htm>

Vaccinations: CDC recommends the following vaccines: *(again, I don't think it's necessary to get all of them—we'll only be there a short time)*

See your doctor at least 4–6 weeks before your trip to allow time for shots to take effect.

- Hepatitis A or immune globulin (IG).
- Hepatitis B, if you might be exposed to blood (for example, health-care workers), have sexual contact with the local population, stay longer than 6 months, or be exposed through medical treatment.
- Meningococcal (meningitis) vaccine, if you plan to visit the western half of Ethiopia (see meningitis map) from December through June.
- Rabies, if you might be exposed to wild or domestic animals through your work or recreation.
- Typhoid, particularly if you are visiting developing countries in this region.
- Yellow fever, if traveling to Burundi, Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, Somalia, Tanzania, or Uganda.
- As needed, booster doses for tetanus-diphtheria, measles, and a one-time dose of polio vaccine for adults. Hepatitis B vaccine is now recommended for all infants and for children ages 11–12 years who did not receive the series as infants.

Traveler's Diarrhea: Some of the things that help prevent it are:

- Wash hands frequently (or use hand sanitizer or wet wipes)
- Take Pepto-Bismol (tablets are easier) for the first three or four days, to ease your stomach into the new environment.
- Take acidophilus capsules daily throughout the trip (so the good flora outnumbers the bad flora in your intestines).
- Don't eat food that hasn't been cooked or washed in clean water.
- Only used bottled or filtered water for drinking, brushing teeth and washing food. I use the *First Need* water filter (from REI), which filters out 99.9% of all microorganisms, and that way you never run out of purified water. It also cuts down on the number of plastic bottles littering the landscape—they don't have much in the way of recycling facilities.

Climate, Weather, etc.

Arusha is located in northern Tanzania, just south of the equator in East Africa. Because it's equatorial, there's not much variation in seasons, just wet or dry. Arusha is located on high plains (about 4,000 feet above sea level), so it's drier and cooler than lower elevations. Mt. Meru, which is at the center of the Selian service area, is 17,000 feet high, and sometimes has snow on it! Mt. Kilimanjaro, about 2 hours away, is 19,000 and has permanent snow fields at the top.

We will be there in the dry season between the short rains (Nov/Dec) and the long rains (March – May), so it will probably not rain much. Sometimes the rain comes early, like it did this year, and we'll get some rain in February. It gets in the 60's at night (you may need a jacket at night), and in the 80's during the day. The equatorial sun is hot and direct, so use sunscreen, and if you are sensitive to heat, bring a cooling bandana or other cooling device.

Visa Information:

Tanzanian visas now cost US \$100, cash only, payable when you arrive either at the border (if you travel overland from Kenya) or at the airport if you fly in. Bring 20's, recent issue bills with no tears or marks. They'll give you a visa application form to fill out when you arrive. You will not need to bring a photo. Kenyan transit visas are \$20, US cash only.

Money, etc:

Bring some **cash**—between \$500 and \$1000. The bills must be the newest issue (they think that if we've changed our money, the old money isn't any good anymore), and the bills must be unmarked and in good condition (not torn) or they won't take them. 20's are good, but bring some 100's as well, as you'll often get a better rate changing a \$100 bill.

ATM's are found in all airports and cities of any size. Bring your debit card and memorize your PIN. If one ATM doesn't work, try another. If you have more than one bank account, bring your debit cards for both. You are usually limited in how much you can take out of a machine at a time or how much you can withdraw in 24hrs. Usually it's around \$300 per day. Check ahead of time to see what your bank charges—my credit union charges 1% on each transaction, with

no ATM fee. My bank, however, charges 3% and \$2 per transaction (they were willing, however, to waive the \$2 charges after I got back, given the “mission work” nature of the trip).

Credit Cards: Most charge 3% on all foreign transactions, and many businesses in Africa that take credit cards will charge a fee of 4% or more in addition. Many people don't accept credit cards. Cash is usually best.

How to stay safe:

When you leave your room, lock your valuables in the hotel safe or lock them in a suitcase in your room. When you are out and about, keep a little money in your pocket or somewhere where you can easily get at it. Keep ATM card, more cash, passport, etc. in a neck pouch inside your shirt or other secure location. When in transit, keep large amounts of cash, credit card, etc. in a money belt or other hidden secure spot. Don't talk to people who try to talk to you or try to sell you something on the streets. You'll have plenty of good interactions with people through our hospice visits, etc. Pretend you're on the subway late at night in New York City. You wouldn't talk to someone who walks up to you and seems to want to be your friend in that situation—don't do it when you're traveling in Africa, either.

Current/plugs:

Go to: <http://www.travel-images.com/electric-plugs.html>

Tanzania's current is 230V 50 Hz (D & G plugs on that webpage)

G - 3 large flat prongs - "British" type - BS 1363 system

D - Similar to C ("French type") but with an earth connector (round prongs, triangle arrangement)

The current is 240 like in Europe, but with different prongs. My battery charger (and most camera chargers & laptops) has an automatic current converter, but you just need a plug adapter. Take a look on the charger--it should say something like "input: 100v--240v AC" if it will work without a voltage converter. You can get a set of plug adapters at luggage stores, etc. If they're just prong adapters, they aren't expensive.