

Health Advice for Travellers

to the Festival of Pacific Arts, Guam 2016

The quadrennial Festival of Pacific Arts is one of the largest mass gatherings in the Pacific region, attracting as many as 3000 participants from 22 Pacific island countries and territories, as well as from Australia and New Zealand, and other countries. A large number of participants and visitors are expected to attend this year's festival. The Government of Guam is hosting the 12th Festival of Pacific Arts, (Guam Festpac 2016), from 22 May to 4 June 2016. This mass gathering poses unique public health risks, not only to citizen of the host country, but also to visitors.

The Government of Guam and its partners have worked hard to ensure that your stay during Guam Festpac 2016 is healthy and safe. Guam is generally considered a safe country to travel to. However, each visitor is responsible for protecting their health while in Guam. To protect yourself against illness and injury, please plan ahead and follow the health advice below.



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BEFORE you travel

Vaccinations

You should be up-to-date on your routine and recommended vaccinations, including measles, mumps and rubella (MMR), diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis and polio. You may also want to get vaccines for Hepatitis A, Hepatitis B, Typhoid Fever, and seasonal influenza. Consult your general practitioner for more advice about vaccinations.

Pre-existing medical conditions

For their own safety and wellbeing, participants and visitors should be fit for travel. Those with pre-existing medical conditions must ensure that they are cleared for travel by scheduling a doctor's appointment at least four weeks before travel. Talk to your doctor about medicines that you may need when travelling to Guam during your period of stay.

Weather

Bring sunscreen, sunglasses and a hat to protect against sunburn.

DURING the festival

Sexually transmitted infections

To avoid the risk of contracting sexually transmitted infections, such as HIV, chlamydia and gonorrhoea, practice safe sex and use condoms correctly.

Food and water safety

To prevent illnesses transmitted through food and water, consume food that is thoroughly cooked, and wash fruits and vegetables if they are not peeled. Drink water that is safe and clean. Follow food safety and water safety guidelines. Practise good hand hygiene, including washing your hands frequently with soap and water. Although hand sanitising gel may be effective against respiratory pathogens, such as viruses that can cause influenza and the common cold, it may not be effective against gastrointestinal pathogens. Therefore, there is no substitute for good hand-washing with soap, running water and sanitary paper towel.

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Mosquitoes and insects

Take measures to avoid, and to protect against, mosquitoes and insects that spread diseases by: wearing appropriate clothing, such as long-sleeved shirts and long pants; applying an insect repellent containing DEET to exposed skin; and treating clothes with permethrin for added protection.



Heat



Dehydration and heat-related illness are common in mass gatherings in tropical climates. Avoid long exposure to the sun during the day and wear sunscreen to avoid sunburn. Stay hydrated by frequently drinking safe water.

Road safety

In Guam people drive on the right-hand side of the road. Be mindful of this when you are crossing roads, and of course be very careful when driving if you are not used to this. The legal blood alcohol limit for driving in Guam is 0.08%, however it is wise to avoid drinking and driving.



EMERGENCY



In the event of a serious illness or injury,

call 911

Note that health insurance that covers you in your home country may not cover you in Guam, so you may have to pay for any care you receive in Guam. Therefore, consider taking out an appropriate level of travel health insurance.



AFTER the festival

If you develop any illness after returning from Guam, you may have obligations to notify immigration and local healthcare authorities. You should report any illnesses you have developed, and indicate your travel history.

GENERAL ADVICE for everyone

01

Practise healthy habits, such as good hand hygiene and proper coughing and sneezing etiquette (cover your mouth and nose with a tissue, or cough or sneeze into your upper sleeve).

02

Avoid abusing alcohol and/or taking any other drugs which may lead to health problems and/or increase the risk of unhealthy or dangerous behaviour.

03

Avoid swimming indiscriminately at beaches and in freshwater lakes and rivers. Follow the [Guam Environmental Protection Agency Beach Advisory](#) for guidance.