

CHECKLIST: YELLOW FEVER VACCINE

The following questions will help your health professional to decide if yellow fever vaccine is right for you. During your consultation, please ask if you have any questions or concerns and ask for anything you do not understand to be explained.

Yellow fever vaccine gives good protection against yellow fever. However, like any drug, this vaccine can very occasionally cause serious side effects.

If you answer “yes” to any questions, you need to give more details during your appointment. This is to check that yellow fever vaccine is safe for you. To read more about why these questions are important, please see the back of this form.

	Please Tick	
	Yes	No
1. How old are you?		
2. Are you feeling unwell today?		
3. Do you have any allergies, particularly to eggs or chicken protein?		
4. Have you ever reacted to a previous yellow fever vaccine?		
5. Do you have cancer or have you had cancer in the past (even if it was a long time ago)?		
6. Do you have any illness that might affect your immune system? (e.g. leukaemias, lymphoma, cellular immune deficiencies, chronic lymphoproliferative conditions, stem cell transplant)		
7. Are you HIV positive?		
8. Are you taking any medicines (now or in the past year) that affect your immune system? (e.g. steroids, biological or non-biological immune modulating medicines, treatment following an organ transplant)		
9. Are you having chemotherapy or radiotherapy (now or within the last year)?		
10. Have you ever been told that you may have a problem with your thymus gland (includes myasthenia gravis or a thymoma)?		
11. Have you had an operation to remove your thymus gland (thymectomy) for any reason including during cardiac surgery?		
12. Have you ever had open chest surgery?		
13. Are you pregnant or planning a pregnancy?		
14. Are you breast feeding?		
15. Do you have a first-degree family relative (i.e. a blood relative – mother, father, full brother, sister or child) who has had a serious adverse reaction to yellow fever vaccine?		

I have read the above and confirm that the questions have been answered to the best of my knowledge.

Name of Patient..... Signature of Patient..... Date.....

Name of Parent/Guardian..... Signature of Parent/Guardian..... Date.....

Form reviewed by..... Qualifications..... Date.....

PLEASE TURN OVER

Why are these questions important?

1. How old are you?

There is a small risk of serious side effects with this vaccine for some people. There is a greater risk of yellow fever vaccine related brain inflammation (encephalitis) in very young babies. Babies under six months should not have the vaccine and babies between six to eight months should only be given this vaccine if the risk of yellow fever at your destination is considered to be high, such as during epidemics/outbreaks, and travel is unavoidable. Specialist advice should be sought in these situations. The risk of vaccine related serious side effects increases with age; if you are aged 60 years and older you are at increased risk compared to younger travellers. Those who are 60 years or older who are travelling to areas where yellow fever vaccine is 'generally not recommended' by the World Health Organization, should not receive vaccine. You must have a detailed discussion with your health professional about the risk of yellow fever at your destination and your risk of having vaccine related side effects. Further information is available in the [NaTHNaC Yellow Fever Information Leaflet for Travellers](#).

2. Are you feeling unwell today?

Even if you have a minor illness, your vaccination can usually go ahead. There is no evidence that being unwell now, makes the vaccine less effective or increases your risk of vaccine side effects. However, vaccination may be delayed if you have a temperature/fever until you have fully recovered. This is to make sure any symptoms are not confused with possible reactions to the vaccine.

3. Do you have any allergies, particularly to eggs or chicken protein?

4. Have you ever reacted to a previous yellow fever vaccine?

This vaccine may contain traces of egg, chicken protein and other ingredients that some people are occasionally allergic to. If you have ever had a serious reaction (anaphylaxis) to anything that might be contained in this vaccine, you must tell your health professional; you will not usually be able to receive yellow fever vaccine.

5. Do you have cancer, or have you had cancer (even if it was a long time ago)?

6. Do you have any illness that might affect your immune system?

7. Are you HIV positive?

8. Are you taking any medicines (now or in the past year) that affect your immune system?

9. Are you having chemotherapy or radiotherapy (now or within the past year)?

[5 to 9] This vaccine contains live yellow fever virus that has been weakened. Your response to the vaccine may not be so good if your immune system is weakened by certain illnesses or treatments, but occasionally the vaccine can still be given. However, if your immune system is very weak you must not receive yellow fever vaccine as you are at risk of developing serious side effects from the vaccine including death. Your health professional will be able to advise you.

10. Have you ever been told that you may have a problem with your thymus gland (includes myasthenia gravis or a thymoma)?

The thymus gland is part of your immune system and sometimes does not work properly or has been removed (thymectomy). Myasthenia gravis is a disease that may involve your thymus gland. If you have a history of any of these conditions, you must not receive yellow fever vaccine as you are at risk of developing serious side effects, including death.

11. Have you had an operation to remove your thymus gland (thymectomy) for any reason including during cardiac surgery?

12. Have you ever had open chest surgery?

[11 and 12] The thymus gland is also sometimes removed during chest surgery. If you have ever had open chest surgery, please let your health professional know; YF vaccine can still be given in some instances following chest surgery.

13. Are you pregnant or planning a pregnancy?

Safety of yellow fever vaccine during pregnancy is not clear, although increased complications for mother or baby have not been reported when a pregnant woman has been accidentally vaccinated. You should have a detailed discussion with your health professional about the risks of yellow fever at your destination and the use of the vaccine in pregnancy. This will help you decide whether yellow fever vaccination is right for you at this time. If you are planning a pregnancy, it is recommended to wait until 28 days after yellow fever vaccination before conceiving.

14. Are you breast feeding?

You are encouraged to continue breast feeding during your trip. However, there have been a few reports of very young (less than two months of age) breast fed babies developing brain inflammation (encephalitis) shortly after their mothers received yellow fever vaccine. Have a discussion with your health professional whether the risk of yellow fever at destination is sufficiently high for vaccine to be advised.

15. Do you have a first-degree family member who has had a serious adverse reaction to yellow fever vaccine?

If a first-degree family member had a serious adverse reaction to yellow fever vaccine and that was not due to a known medical risk factor, it is possible that you may be susceptible to developing a serious adverse reaction due to an unidentified genetic reason.

If you cannot have the yellow fever vaccination, and travel to areas where yellow fever occurs cannot be avoided, you still need advice about how to avoid mosquito bites and yellow fever certificate requirements

First published: 10 July 2019

Last updated: 15 January 2020

Please check the [TravelHealthPro](#) and [Yellow Fever Zone](#) websites for updates