

كلية طب وايل كورنيل في قطر Weill Cornell Medical College in Qatar

Member of Qatar Foundation

Press Release

WCMC-Q offers expert advice on travel health

Doha – May 13, 2015: Ways to safeguard your health while traveling were explained in the latest edition of Weill Cornell Medical College in Qatar's (WCMC-Q) Ask the Expert Series.

As travel to exotic and other locations becomes more common, travelers need to be aware of the health risks posed by visiting countries where standards of hygiene and healthcare may be lower than they are used to, explained Dr. Ravinder Mamtani, Associate Dean for Global and Public Health at WCMC-Q.

Dr. Mamtani explained to the assembled audience at Doha's Diplomatic Club on Tuesday 12 May that following a few simple precautions could dramatically reduce the risk of suffering illness while abroad.

At the interactive public event, entitled 'Health Tips for International Travel', Dr. Mamtani said: "One of the most exciting things about going on holiday is trying new kinds of foods and visiting restaurants, but we also need to be a little bit careful. Avoid eating or drinking at places that do not look clean, ensure you drink only safe water and don't buy food from street vendors.

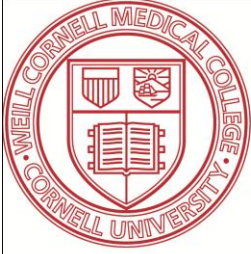
"Always ensure that your food is thoroughly cooked and served hot. Observe good hand hygiene and carry hand sanitizing wipes or gel. These measures will help to reduce the risk of stomach upset and infections, which can really ruin a holiday."

The Ask the Expert series is part of WCMC-Q's Sahtak Awalan: Your Health First campaign, a five-year initiative that aims to encourage members of both the expat and Qatari communities to make healthy lifestyle choices. The events, which are free to attend, begin with a presentation before the audience gets a chance to 'ask the expert' during an interactive Q&A session.

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Dr. Mamtani said that steps could also be taken to avoid serious infectious diseases. “See your doctor before you travel to ensure your travel vaccines are up to date to protect you against serious infections like hepatitis A and B, and yellow fever,” he said.

Dr. Mamtani also advised people traveling to Africa, South America and Asia to be aware of the risks of mosquito bites and other parasites. If traveling to an area where there is a malaria risk, malaria pills should be taken and insect repellent and mosquito nets should be used. It is also wise to take a well-stocked emergency medical kit with you.

You should also remember to protect your skin from the sun with hats and long-sleeved garments and wear sunscreen lotion with a Sun Protection Factor (SPF) appropriate for your skin tone. Avoid the sun in the middle of the day.

Dr. Mamtani advised those with long-term medical conditions to seek advice from their physician before they travel and to take plenty of medication with them. Carry a list of reputable hospitals in your destination and ensure your health insurance is adequate and that you have a copy of your policy.

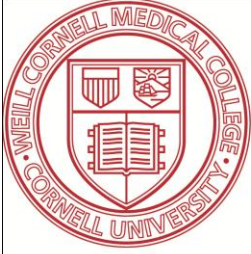
To reduce the risk of Deep Vein Thrombosis (DVT) on long haul flights, stay well hydrated and perform light stretching exercises every one or two hours. If you have a health condition that could increase your risk of suffering DVT, wear compression stockings.

Dr. Sohaila Cheema, WCMC-Q’s Director of Global and Public Health, said: “We want to help people understand and minimize the risks to their health when they travel so that they can concentrate on having a good time and return home in good health.”

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About Weill Cornell Medical College in Qatar

Weill Cornell Medical College in Qatar is a partnership between Cornell University and Qatar Foundation. It offers pre-medical and medical courses leading to the Cornell University M.D. degree with teaching by Cornell and Weill Cornell faculty and by physicians at Hamad Medical Corporation (HMC) and Aspetar Orthopedic and Sports Medicine Hospital who hold Weill Cornell appointments.

Through its biomedical research program, WCMC-Q is building a sustainable research community in Qatar while advancing basic science and clinical research. Through its medical college, WCMC-Q seeks to provide the finest education possible for medical students, to improve health care both now and for future generations, and to provide high quality health care to the Qatari population.

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