



## Vaccines for the traveling family

### Description

Well, no choice, need to talk about it. Anyway, the minute we say "trip" people start "Did you get vaccines? Did you? Yeah sure" and they are so satisfied since it's true, they did not leave the country, but at least we suffered and we got the needles.

Vaccines are hot topic. Of the vaccines by the Ministry of Health Vaccine Program from age zero to current age there have been quite a bit of a talk, but somehow the Far-East vaccines are questioned by nobody. You just do it.

But it cannot just pass us this way, without thinking. We do not "just do it", although in the end we decided to do almost all vaccines.

Our vaccine policy with the children since they were born to the day has been very, very selective. In fact, except of one shot our eldest took when he was one year old (anti-tetanus), to our middle one when he broke two fingers two years ago and a passive polio vaccine due to the stupid scare of polio that has spread throughout the country last summer, our children have not been vaccinated at all and maybe that's why they are going through it now so easily, because they are strong and healthy and their immune system is strong.

So if it helps anyone, here are our thoughts about vaccines to the East. And some important information.

### Travelers clinic

Vaccines are given in travelers clinic. There are several such clinics in the country. We chose the travelers clinic in Laniado Hospital. It is quite close to us and the place itself is nice. A great fun it's not in any case. Let's not get over-excited, and one of the facilities there is the slowest secretary on earth. But overall they are really, really terrific. When we arrived there for the first time and the nice nurse discovered our kids are unvaccinated and they have a vaccination program to keep her quite busy and less than two months to go, she expressed her feelings a little loud. I looked her in the eye and told her, darling, little children are afraid, you know, so maybe us grown up should act a bit more restrained ..? She took over herself immediately, thanking me for the feedback and from that moment on we are working on our relationships, in a good way.

The road to the nurse with the syringes winds through the doctor's room, who goes over our (non-existing) vaccination certificates, a little shocked (a lot) and builds a vaccination program of all the good

stuff we need to get in his opinion. We narrowed it down a bit as part as our parents role. Our case included “ Polio, tetanus (automatically given diphtheria, we are against but we chose not to fight this battle), typhoid, meningitis, Japanese encephalitis, all types of Hepatitis A, B, and C, and MMR vaccine “ measles, mumps and rubella. Oh, and rabies.

The MMR, we decided not to give, it will require us to take care of children vaccinated for mumps in adolescence (only the boys) and rubella (all of them), but we have planned to do it anyway.

From the same reasons, we thought to give up the hepatitis B, because this is a sexually or blood transit transmitted disease, and if we were at home we wouldn’t have done it before puberty or even later. But as we travel to different countries, and we don’t know for certain whether blood banks are checking each packet of blood (as they do here) instead of a sample basis only. So if, God forbid, any of us would require a blood transfusion, we prefer not to worry about whether it is infected with hepatitis B.

We decided to give the rabies, a practical consideration “ if you are immune to rabies, and get bitten by a dog or a monkey and suspect a rabies infection, all it takes is to get to a travelers clinic or local hospital to get one shot of rabies vaccine, and that’s the end of the story. On the other way, if you are not vaccinated, and a biting event happens that causes you to suspect infection (have I already mentioned that rabies is a disease with a mortality rate of, uhm, a hundred percent..? around.), you’ll have to get the entire set of shots “ four injections and a booster for dessert. Means being more than a month in the same a place where you can get the shots and it can really mess up your trip. Not to mention if your visa is just about to expire. And if it happens to more than one of you in more than one destination, well, Murphy would simply love it. So we decided to also vaccinate for rabies, and let us not need it.

Now that we’re almost done, I have thoughts about the Japanese encephalitis vaccine. On second thought, maybe we shouldn’t have done it. It’s expensive, have side effects and I’m not sure if I would have looked into the matter a little more I wouldn’t come to the conclusion that it is in fact unnecessary. Worth a check.

### **When to start vaccinating?**

The whole story unfolds across six or seven dates with the nurse, so as not to put the burden of more than two or at most three shots in a session over the children. In that case you should start at least two months before the flight.

### **Anything else..?**

Take Rescue. It really helped me and the children. The One is a tough guy.

It is wise to set the strategy together with your kids and then stick to it. For us it is: “the relaxing drops” (even more than one drop, as much as they want), the small one sitting on my or her father’s laps, sitting on the big chair while I go down to their eye level holding hands. They choose whether to look me in the eye, or to shut them. It is about guiding them in supportive breathing (a lot of air through the nose and then exhale it through the mouth, the nurse inserts the needle with the removal of the air) and counting out loud together “ usually up to a five until the injection was done.

**It is worth remembering** that this is a situation with a potential for triggering wo/men who passed sexual exploitation. If it is on the agenda, do not skip the Rescue or anything else that relaxes you, and do not you come alone with the kids. Get there both of you to support the children at any time required, as well as yourselves. It’s amazing because I teach in the doulas course in details the subject of

triggers due to medical situations with victims of sexual assault. Injections as a penetrative action are pretty high up on the list of triggers, and yet I did not come prepared to the first session and it was not too nice. So do not say you were not told because indeed I was not told about it, but here I am saying it trying to fix the damage for future generations.

After the session you can go get ice creams or do something else nice together.

**Remember to take with you the vaccination certificates.** Treat them like second rank passports and if there is someone sick or taking regular medication at home, also attach a letter from your family physician or pediatrician with details.

PS- Just got a call today from the nurse from the travelers clinic (I told you we are working on our relationship) to update me that she consulted with the doctor again, and we don't have enough time to get the polio vaccine shot. During the conversation, it turned out that we still have to work on this relationship, because my response was, "OK, we won't do it." Then she said "You can postpone the flight." And I said, um, not exactly said, but rather cried with laughter.

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