

Introduction

We (Nick & Vicki) have just spent 1 year travelling overland in a Land Rover in Africa and wanted to share with you our medical / health care tips.

Hygiene & Basics

Two overriding issues you have to think about are clean drinking water and basic body hygiene. Bugs love Africa!!! We used a charcoal / ceramic water filter and filtered all water we consumed orally. We never got seriously ill and only had a couple episodes of "50:50" number 2 action. We also washed our hands and tried to have flannel washes when water was low or no showers were handy (that's quite often in Africa). Bottom line, keep clean and drink clean water and you minimise a lot of problems. Also, if you cut yourself, clean it and treat it quickly with Savlon or Savlon spray. Cover up feet, ankles and arms in the evening. We only used DEET on our clothing and tried to avoid spraying it on our skin.

Injections

We also had all our jabs done well in advance - we had approx' 7 visits to the local clinic in the UK. Visit your GP and chat with the nurse. They have access to MASTA and can advise what you need based on your route. You will need Yellow fever certificate and a list of the jabs you have had, it does get asked for in Africa, esp. Nigeria!!

Reading

We took the Lonely Planet pocket health book, a VERY good buy and it helps give you a second opinion if you are a solo traveller. It's small enough to pack in a bike too. We looked at this a lot!

What medical kit did we take?

We have listed the main items we took. They were packable into 3 small bags (pictured). We kept a basic kit in the front cab and the smaller medical kits were kept in the shade / cool part of the vehicle. We kept our malaria pills, text kits in the fridge. We have tried to indicate the frequency of usage too as a rough guide.



- Doxycyclin tablets **Malaria prophylaxis** - used daily
- Malarone tablets **Malaria treatment** (4 Tablets in one dose for 3 days) - not used
- Canesten / Clotrimazole cream **Topical cream for vaginal / skin fungal infections** - used
- Vagisil cream **Treatment for vaginal irritation** - not used
- ASPAR / Hayleve antihistamine tablets **Treatments for hay fever & allergies** - used
- Hydrocortisone / Eurax **Topical cream for non infected itchy skin rashes** - used
- Mycil / Daktarin cream & Daktarin Powder **Anti fungal treatment for athlete's foot** - used
- Chloramphenicol antibiotic ointment **Infected eyes / bacterial conjunctivitis treatment** - not used
- Safyr Bleu **Eye irritation liquid drop treatment** - used
- Savlon Pavidone spray **Treatment of skin wounds, abrasions** - used this a lot!
- Sodium Chloride solution ampules **Washing of small wounds** - used
- Cetrimide / Germolene / Savlon antiseptic creams **Treatment of minor cuts** - used this a lot
- Calamine cream **Treatment of sunburn & windburn** - used
- Ibuprofen tablets **Musculo skeletal pain relief / anti-inflammatory** - used a lot
- Paracetamol tablets **General pain relief / headaches** - used
- Lemsip powders **Treatment for flu** - used
- Friars Balsam liquid, Sudafed tablets, Strepsil sweets **Treatments of colds / cold decongestion** - used the latter
- Senokot tablets (laxative) **Treatment for constipation** - not used
- Normalone / Imodium tablets **Antidiarrhoeal treatment** - used once
- Electrolade powders sachets **Rehydration treatment** - used several times

- Haemorrhoid suppositories **Treatment of haemorrhoids / pain relief** - used once
- Bisodol (tablets) **Antacid treatment** - used
- Aquatabs tablets **Emergency water treatment** - not used
- DEET - used sparingly and generally on clothing

Medical Hardware

- NOMAD Sterile kits x 3 - used some items from these kits
- Dental kit x1 - never used
- Malaria near Patient Test Kits - used once for another person
- Compeed blister pack x1 - used once
- Tapes (various) - used• Antiseptic wipes (various) - used
- Latex gloves (various) - used
- Rehydration spoons x2 - used once
- Plasters, bandages & burn dressings (Various) - used
- Wound dressings (various) - used
- Steri-strip wound closures (various) - not used
- Tweezers - used• Scissors x2 - used
- Thermometer - used• Safety pins - used
- Emergency foil blankets x2 - not used
- Emergency glow sticks x2 - not used
- Blood donor cards - reference only BUT good to know your blood group

What conditions did we get?

On the whole we only had minor complaints that were easily treatable:

Thrush, blisters, sunburn, athlete's foot, headaches, dehydration, flu, 1x skin infection from mossie bite, a few boils, 1x haemorrhoid (old age). We both suffered from sun sensitivity from using Doxycyclin tablets. This was worse at the equator.

What extra medicine did we need?

We bought some Cyprofloxacin (for treating skin infections) in Mali. Easily obtainable and good for treating infected bites and boils.

Nick & Vicki

www.langebaan-sunset.com

Stonehenge to Cape Town 2010/11