

Survival Guide

HEALTH 204

BEFORE YOU GO204

Insurance..... 204

**Recommended
Vaccinations 204**

Websites 204

**IN VANUATU &
NEW CALEDONIA.....204**

**Availability &
Cost of Health Care ... 204**

Infectious Diseases ... 205

Traveller's Diarrhoea .. 205

Giardiasis..... 205

**Environmental
Hazards 205**

Women's Health 206

Traditional Medicine .. 206

LANGUAGE207

GLOSSARY.....212

Health

BEFORE YOU GO

Planning before departure, particularly for pre-existing illnesses, will save trouble later. See your dentist before you go; carry a spare pair of contact lenses and glasses with you; and take your optical prescription. Bring medications in their original labelled containers, and a letter from your doctor describing your medical conditions and medications. If carrying syringes or needles, have a letter saying they're needed, or buy a prepared pack from a travel-health clinic.

Insurance

If your health insurance doesn't cover you for medical expenses abroad, consider extra insurance; see www.lonelyplanet.com/travel-insurance. Find out if your insurance plan will make payments directly to providers or reimburse you later; in both Vanuatu and New Caledonia private doctors expect payment in cash.

Make sure your insurance covers evacuation to the nearest major centre – the extra premium for this is usually not very much.

Recommended Vaccinations

- ✦ Hepatitis A
- ✦ Hepatitis B
- ✦ Measles, mumps, rubella (MMR)
- ✦ Tetanus-diphtheria
- ✦ Typhoid

Websites

Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (www.cdc.gov)

Fit for Travel (www.fitfortravel.scot.nhs.uk) User-friendly, up-to-date information about outbreaks.

Lonely Planet (lonelyplanet.com) A good place to start.

MD Travel Health (www.mdtravelhealth.com) Free travel-health recommendations.

Travel Doctor (www.traveldoctor.com.au) Australian site with user-friendly, up-to-date information.

World Health Organization (www.who.int/ith) The WHO's *International Travel and Health* guide is available free online.

Also consult your government's travel-health website:

Australia (www.dfat.gov.au/travel)

Canada (www.hc-sc.gc.ca)

UK (www.dh.gov.uk/policyandguidance/healthadvicefortravel/lers/fs/en)

USA (www.cdc.gov/travel)

IN VANUATU & NEW CALEDONIA

Availability & Cost of Health Care

New Caledonian health care is of a high standard; specialists in most disciplines are available and citizens of the EU have the same eligibility for government medical care as in France. Costs can be high, from AUD\$4000 per day for an intensive-care bed.

In Vanuatu, Port Vila's lack of quality systems may mean the equipment or medication you need is not available, even for simple problems. Outside Port Vila, diagnostic and treatment facilities are rarely available, but volunteer doctors may be present in some hospitals. Santo has a program within which international junior doctors work at its hospital.

Private medical practitioners in both countries will expect payment in cash. Consultation fees, X-rays etc cost around the same as those in Western countries. Where hospital facilities exist, a cash deposit will be required; credit cards may not be accepted. Public-hospital outpatient services are free, but waiting times can be very long.