

## **Policy for altitude sickness / traveller's diarrhoea medication**

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### **Introduction**

GPs are not responsible for the prescribing of items for conditions which may arise while abroad travelling such as sunscreens, flight socks, antibiotics, travel sickness tablets or diarrhoea medications. The purpose of this policy is to outline the practice stance on the provision of certain medications used for travel for example for altitude sickness and travel diarrhoea.

### **Altitude sickness**

Proper acclimatisation is the best way to prevent altitude sickness.

Medications are available but this is an 'off label' use so carries a greater medico-legal responsibility and should only be available privately. Therefore, patients should be redirected to a specialist travel clinic for advice on altitude sickness.

### **Travellers' diarrhoea**

This is described as passing three or more unformed stools in 24 hours accompanied with at least one of the following: abdominal pain/cramps, nausea, vomiting, fever or blood in the stools during or within 10 days of travel.

Patients can buy over the counter remedies before travelling from the chemist and if becoming unwell should seek medical advice whilst abroad from a local doctor. If a patient feels they are high risk or are travelling to a high-risk area they should be directed to a specialist travel clinic for advice.