

## Travel Medicine Advisory Puerto Rico -- March 2022

December 20, 2021

Dear Parents/Guardians:

A Travel Medicine Advisory is issued by the Chen Center for all trips coordinated through the Center for Service and Global Citizenship (CSGC). Travel medicine advice for Puerto Rico is also available at the Travelers' Health website of The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) <http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/>

More information about traveling domestically during the COVID-19 pandemic is also available at the CDC website: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/travel-during-covid19.html>

We encourage you to look over the health information provided by these websites.

*For this trip, we recommend your child should:*

- *Be up to date on all of the routine childhood immunizations.*
- *Receive Hepatitis A vaccine or appropriate booster, if not already received.*
- *Receive influenza vaccine, if not already received.*
- *Protect self from sun exposure by appropriately using sunscreen ( $\geq 30$  SPF) and, when possible, wearing long sleeves and a hat.*
- *Protect self from bug bites (mosquitos, ticks and fleas) which can be vectors of disease*
  - *Appropriately use an insect repellent containing at least 30% DEET.*
  - *Wear long sleeve shirts, pants and a hat when possible. Consider permethrin treated clothing.*
  - *Use air conditioning and bed nets when available.*
  - *Check body for ticks at the end of every day.*
  - *Shower daily, thoroughly and soon after walking in any wooded, bushy or grassy areas.*
  - *Stay in center of hiking trails. Avoid high grass and bushes.*
- *Be fully vaccinated (at least 2 weeks since last dose of the series) against COVID-19 and receive any recommended COVID-19 vaccine boosters (when age appropriate)*

Please complete and sign the enclosed Travel Health Questionnaire and permission form by **January 5, 2022**. It is important that we have accurate health related information prior to this trip.

There is risk of exposure in Puerto Rico to diseases and health problems beyond those preventable by vaccines. The CDC website <https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/destinations/traveler/none/puerto-rico> outlines some of these health risks.

There is a risk of contracting the mosquito borne viral diseases (such as Zika and Dengue) while in Puerto Rico. The importance of preventing these illnesses with DEET and mosquito bite prevention are outlined at the following sites:

<http://www.cdc.gov/Dengue/>

<https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/diseases/zika>

Please consult these sites to obtain a perspective on the health risks in traveling to Puerto Rico.

We will update any needed immunizations during the months prior to the trip's departure. If vaccines are needed, charges will be billed to your child's student account. Additionally, Ms. Cara Soifer, our nurse practitioner, or I will meet with any students with significant medical problems, medications or allergies in preparation for the trip.

If you want to schedule an appointment with your child's PCP to receive immunizations or travel advice, please do so during an upcoming vacation.

If you have questions, please contact me by email (please put *Puerto Rico trip* in the subject line).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bryant E. Benson MD". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'B' and a distinct 'E'.

Bryant E. Benson, MD  
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Chen Health and Wellness Center  
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