

Travel Medicine Advisory

Puerto Rico-March 2026

November 2025

Dear Parents and Guardians,

A Travel Medicine Advisory is issued by the D.S. Chen Health Center for all trips coordinated through the Center for Service and Global Citizenship (CSGC). Travel medicine advice is also available at the [Travelers' Health website of The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#).

For this trip to Puerto Rico, we recommend your child should:

- *Be up to date on all routine childhood immunizations.*
- *Receive Hepatitis A vaccine or appropriate booster, if not already received.*
- *Receive Influenza vaccine, if not already received.*
- *Receive and be up to date on COVID vaccines and boosters.*
- *Receive Typhoid vaccine and/or boosters if they have not already received them.*
- *Protect self from bug bites (mosquitos, ticks and fleas) which can be vectors for disease such as [Dengue](#), [African Tick Bite Fever](#), and [Zika](#).*
 - *Appropriately use an insect repellent containing at least 15-30% DEET or Picardin 5-10%.*
 - *Wear long-sleeved shirts, pants and a hat when possible. Consider permethrin treated clothing.*
 - *Use air conditioning when available.*
 - *Check body for ticks at 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.*
- *Protect self from sun exposure by appropriately using sunscreen (30 SPF or higher) and, when possible, wearing long sleeves and a hat.*
- *Bring an antibiotic to be taken in case of [Traveler's Diarrhea](#).*
- *Practice [hand hygiene](#) and [safe food/drink choices](#).*
- *Avoid any contact with any animal or wildlife (including domesticated pets) unless directly supervised by a trip chaperone.*
- *Not swim in any body of water unless approved to do so by their trip leader.*
- *Always be aware of their surroundings and reach out to a trip leader if they notice anything suspicious or askew.*

Despite the use of vaccines and the above practices to reduce risk of disease, there is still a risk of acquiring serious illness or disease while abroad. We ask that you review the [CDC's](#) website regarding travel to Puerto Rico to obtain a better perspective on the potentially serious health risks and disease exposures involved in traveling to this destination. Please feel free to reach out to our office if you have any questions or concerns.

The nurse practitioner, Ms. Cara Soifer, or I will meet with all students going on this trip individually to review

their health history including medical problems, medications, allergies and immunizations. We will update any needed immunizations at that time and determine appropriate Traveler's Diarrhea medication. We typically recommend (Z-pak) as a Traveler's Diarrhea medication. If vaccines are needed, charges will be billed to your child's student account. Medication will be billed to your child's health insurance, though coverage may vary.

If you want to schedule an appointment with your child's PCP or with a travel medicine specialist to receive immunizations, medication and travel advice, please do so during an upcoming break.

Please complete and sign the enclosed Travel Health Questionnaire by November 24, 2025.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns you may have regarding this advisory.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bryant E. Benson MD". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Bryant E. Benson, MD Director of
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