



## Management of patients who plan to travel

Evidence-based Medicine

Official Recommendations

Expert opinion

Abatacept-treated patients can travel between two infusions but should take a number of precautions. The Summary of Product Characteristics contains no specific recommendations about traveling (20) and the advice given here is based on the opinions of experts.

The yellow fever vaccine is required in some countries in Africa and in Central and South America. However, the yellow fever vaccine is contraindicated during abatacept therapy. Before making arrangements to travel to a country in Africa or in Central or South America, patients must find out whether the yellow fever vaccine is necessary or mandatory. If such is the case, patients must discuss this problem as quickly as possible with their physician (refer to the “Vaccinations” fact sheet). Web sites that provide comprehensive information on the immunizations required in each country include <http://www.pasteur.fr/ip/easysite/pasteur/en>

Antimalarial prophylaxis is not contraindicated (20). No major safety concerns have been identified in patients taking both abatacept and hydroxychloroquine (20). In the 1-year ASSURE study (32) comparing the safety of abatacept or placebo added to a conventional disease-modifying drug or to a biologic, hydroxychloroquine/chloroquine was used by 10.9% to 29.4% of patients, depending on the group. No major differences were found between the abatacept and placebo groups regarding the rates of adverse events, serious adverse events, or treatment discontinuation due to adverse events.

Traveling to foreign countries (particularly but not only those located in the tropics) requires a number of precautions regarding hygiene. Patients should carry essential medications and take precautions regarding food (diarrhea) and insects (mosquitoes, flies...).

Depending on the destination, your patient may need to be referred to a **travel health clinic**.