



## DESTINATION REPORT

### **IRAN**

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## GENERAL OVERVIEW

The area now known as Iran historically constituted most of the Persian Empire. The country was run by a series of monarchs, several of whom were overthrown in the twentieth century. The Iranian Revolution of 1979 instituted a strict theocratic government. Since the revolution, the Islamic Republic of Iran has had troubled relations with the international community. From 1980 to 1988, a costly war took place between Iran and Iraq over territorial disputes, and led to clashes with United States and United Nations after their military involvement. Currently the United States and United Nations, along with other Western countries, have a variety of sanctions in place against Iran. The situation is further complicated by Iran's status as one of the largest oil producers in the world.

Iran is located in the Middle East, and borders Pakistan, Iraq, Turkey, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Turkmenistan, and Afghanistan, as well as the Caspian and Arabian Seas. The terrain is quite varied, with a great deal of desert and a very arid climate.

The population of Iran is approximately 85.9 million, with 99 percent of individuals practicing Islam and a great majority considered to be ethnically Persian. The official language is Farsi, though a wide variety of languages are also spoken.

# SECURITY ASSESSMENT

## Security Risk Rating

Moderate

## Security Risk Overview

Levels of crime, including violent crime, are generally low. There is an underlying risk of terrorism. Occasional incidents of civil unrest may occur, and are typically related to political and economic events. Areas close to Iran's borders with Iraq, Afghanistan, and Pakistan pose a danger to travelers due to the presence of extremist and terrorist groups, which frequently carry out attacks

Local laws and customs are strictly based on Islamic law, and criminal punishments can be extreme. Government officials may be very suspicious of and prejudiced against foreigners. There have been reports of foreign citizens arbitrarily arrested by the Iranian authorities on various charges, and the ability of embassies to assist their citizens may be limited.

Tensions between Iran and many other countries, particularly the US, remain and may affect travel. These tensions primarily translate to economic sanctions as well as decreased consular services. Be prepared for strict regulation of visas, goods, and currency. Some governments, such as that of the US, have limited representation in the country and, as such, citizens may only be able to access very limited consular assistance.

## Terrorism

Terrorist attacks are not uncommon in Iran. Attacks are carried out throughout the country, but particularly in and around border areas with Afghanistan, Iraq, and Pakistan. Terrorist activity typically involves bombings, kidnappings, or shootings. Bombings are most prevalent in the southeastern Sistan and Baluchestan Province and the West Azerbaijan Province in the northwest.

## Civil Unrest

Unrest occurs throughout Iran, including in Tehran. Demonstrations are typically related to political and economic events, such as elections or the devaluation of the IRR. Be aware of the current political and security environment. Anti-government protests are likely to be swiftly and forcefully dispersed. Anti-Western protests have also taken place in the past and Western diplomatic missions are sometimes targeted by protesters.

Although rare, large-scale violent protests have broken out with little warning in the past, generally in response to political events. Authorities may suspend access to Internet and mobile data services during unrest.

## Personal Security

Violent crime occurs regularly in Iran, and Westerners have been targeted in the past. Attacks take place with greater frequency in areas close to Iran's borders with Afghanistan, Iraq, and Pakistan. Areas within 100 kilometers (60 miles) of Iran's border with Afghanistan, within 20 kilometers (12 miles) of the border with Pakistan, within 10 kilometers (6 miles) of the border with Iraq, the province of Sistan and Baluchistan, and east of Bam and Bandar-e-Abbas towards Iran's border with Pakistan are considered unsafe. The towns of Zahedan, Zabol, and Mirjaveh are particularly dangerous. Gang violence involving drug smuggling and other contraband is frequently reported in the southeastern region.

Petty theft and pick pocketing are common. Bag snatching, typically by criminals on motorcycles, is common. Criminals impersonating policemen have been reported to commit robberies.

Crimes of a sexual nature, including harassment and assault, are underreported due to fear of retaliation. Under Iranian law, victims of sexual assault can be punished for adultery and other "crimes," which can carry harsh sentences. Public displays of affection between members of the opposite sex and sex outside of marriage are considered to be crimes. Relations between non-Muslim men and Muslim women are also illegal.

Many local laws are based on Islam. Criminal penalties are severe and many include the death penalty. Alcohol and pork products are banned. Women are expected to wear a headscarf and cover their legs and arms in public. Same-sex relations are also strictly banned. Individuals, including foreigners, have been sentenced to corporal punishment or even executed after being "found guilty" of homosexuality. It is illegal to proselytize in Iran. Penalties for alleged proselytizers and persons encouraging the act include the death sentence.

It is generally illegal to photograph sensitive buildings and areas, such as government or military installations and prisons. Photographing of people is also prohibited unless granted permission.

The risks are greater for independent travelers or students than for people taking part in an organized tour or business travelers visiting Iran on the invitation of local authorities or companies. Be aware that any behavior that does not have an obvious explanation can put a traveler at risk, and this may include travel off beaten track, being present near crowds or sensitive sites, having contact with Iranian nationals that are of interest to the authorities, or engaging in activities perceived as contrary or detrimental to official Iranian interpretations of Islam.

The threat to travelers is further elevated during times of national unrest, after a terrorist incident, or if there has been an increase in tensions between Iran and the international community. Anti-US sentiment remains high in the country.

Minor earthquakes are frequent in Iran, and major episodes of seismic activity have caused widespread damage and casualties in the past, especially as many structures in Iran are not built to withstand such events. Seismic activity can disrupt daily life and air travel and emergency response capabilities can be limited or delayed throughout Iran during a disaster.

Sandstorms and dust storms regularly occur in Iran and can cause travel disruptions due to reduced visibility. The sandstorms may last for several days.

## Law Enforcement

Iranian security forces are generally effective but sometimes lack the resources to properly prevent, respond to, or investigate crime. There have been reports of corruption in the police and security forces and it has been reported that these officials may expect, request, or demand illegitimate payments from foreigners for real or imaginary violations of local law or for providing routine services.

Checkpoints are set up throughout the country, and officials may be distrustful of foreigners, particularly of Westerners. Some elements of Iranian law enforcement continue to harass, arrest, and detain US citizens, particularly dual US-Iranian nationals. Cooperate with authorities and carry all appropriate documentation at all times in order to avoid complications.

Prison conditions are poor. Overcrowding, poor sanitation, and the mistreatment of prisoners are concerns. Lengthy pretrial detention periods and judicial corruption hinder the justice system. Travelers should make every attempt to notify their embassy or consulate in the event of arrest, as Iranian authorities have on several occasions failed to notify embassies when foreign nationals have been arrested. Be aware that even if requested, adequate consular access is not always granted to the detainees.

## Transportation

**Air:** Iran has not been rated by the International Aviation Safety Assessment Program (IASA). Despite this, international flights on foreign-owned and -operated carriers may be compliant with IASA standards and provide a safe alternative to services based in Iran. Some Iranian airlines are banned from operating in the European Union due to their unsafe operating procedures. On 16 July 2020, the European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) warned passenger airlines of flying through Iranian airspace due to the possibility of misidentification due to the country's security situation, poor civil aviation-military operations coordination, and various air defense systems in Iran.

**Bus:** The bus network in Iran is extensive. Local buses, available in most cities and towns, are separated by gender; males sit in the front of the bus, and women must enter through the back after showing their ticket to the driver. These buses tend to be overcrowded and their use is not recommended. For intercity services, most companies offer two classes, super (first class) and lux (second class). First class buses are air-conditioned, but second class ones are more frequent. Services are inexpensive but can be slow due to government-imposed speed limits. Avoid overnight journeys on buses as the risk of an accident increases.

**Car:** Iran has a very high rate of road accidents. Road travel in Iran can be hazardous due to poor local driving standards, poorly maintained roads, and a lack of infrastructure, particularly in rural areas. To drive in Iran, an International Driving Permit (IDP) is required.

Informal police roadblocks are common and foreigners are often suspected. Criminals have been known to place large rocks in the middle of the highway in an attempt to burst tires. Afterwards, a "passer-by" will come to the motorist's assistance and offer to replace their tire at an exorbitant price. This scam is more common at night time, but incidents have been decreasing due to an increased police presence.

**Taxi:** Taxis are readily available in major cities and most towns and are generally inexpensive. Though they are private taxis (usually yellow), shuttle (shared) taxis are more commonly found. Shuttle taxis are generally shared between four or five people and will normally leave when all paying passengers have been found. However, travelers are recommended to rent a taxi privately (i.e. pay for all the empty seats). Alternatively, travelers can book an agency taxi by telephone or

through a hotel. Agency taxis are the most expensive type of taxi but vehicles are better maintained and more reliable and secure. Lone women are advised to have someone order a taxi for them when traveling after dark, as they tend to be hooted at or completely ignored by drivers when trying to hail one. There is a women-only taxi company in Tehran, whose taxis are operated by female drivers. Avoid unregistered taxis as there have been reports of passengers being robbed and assaulted in these vehicles.

**Train:** Trains are the easiest way to travel around the country. Services are reliable, inexpensive, and faster than buses. However, some trains are older models. Additionally, trains are often overcrowded and thefts may occur onboard.

Tehran has five underground rail lines, and Mashhad has one. Both networks are to be expanded in the near future. In Tehran, services run daily from approximately 05:30-23:00.

**Water :** There is a high risk of maritime attacks by pirates against vessels operating in the Gulf of Oman, the North Arabian Sea, the Gulf of Eden, and the Bab el Mandeb regions.

### **Scams, Fraud, Corruption, and Extortion**

Incidents of impersonation of law enforcement personnel in civilian clothes for the purpose of robbery have been reported in Iran.

Other common scams against foreigners, regardless of destination, include dating and marriage scams, false employment opportunities, and virtual kidnapping for ransom. Avoid giving out personal information at all costs, especially bank or credit card numbers.

Corruption of government employees is widespread in Iran and it has been reported that these officials may expect, request, or demand illegitimate payments from foreigners for real or imaginary violations of local law.

### **Security Advice**

Be prepared. Make an effort to understand your destination environment before you travel: identify the possible threats and prevailing situation, understand your own vulnerabilities and take action to mitigate the risks.

Maintain a low profile and good situational awareness. Ensure you travel with reliable communications equipment, test your mobile (cellular) telephone upon arrival at your destination and keep it fully charged. Make note of emergency telephone numbers, including the police, fire department, ambulance, and embassy or consulate.

Avoid all protests and demonstrations to minimize the risk of exposure to incidental violence. Travelers should walk away or wait inside a shop or restaurant if it is not possible to leave the area. Plan alternate routes to circumvent potential protest locations. Seek the assistance of a local host, or travel with a local driver, where possible.

To minimize the risk of becoming a victim of petty theft, travelers should maintain caution and exercise situational awareness at all times. Avoid overt displays of wealth. If confronted by a criminal, do nothing to antagonize the situation. Carry a "dummy" wallet if possible, and carry a passport photocopy at all times.

Carry handbags on the opposite side from passing traffic to reduce the risk of thieves on motorcycles trying to snatch them.

Avoid walking unless you are confident of the security situation. Do not walk by yourself at night in secluded or troublesome areas of the city. Do not take shortcuts away from main roads, which tend to be busy and provide a safer environment.

National holidays and public festivals tend to attract large crowds in some countries. Such public gatherings, despite a typically enhanced security presence, create a potential venue for disorder or violence. In addition, large crowds may well impede local transportation systems.

Do not buy counterfeit or any goods in violation of copyright laws. Doing so may be a violation of local laws and can carry hefty fines or even prison time.

Reduce risk of injury from car crashes by always wearing a seatbelt. Some countries have heavy fines for not wearing a seatbelt. Avoid drinking and driving. Be sure to travel with all appropriate documentation, including passport and visa photocopies. Individuals who intend on driving should be in possession of their IDP, vehicle registration, and proof of insurance at all times.

Travelers are subject to the laws of Iran, even if they are not a citizen of Iran. Travelers can also be prosecuted for violating their home country's laws while in a foreign country. Travelers should be aware of the laws and customs of the country they are traveling to in order to avoid prosecution.

# HEALTH ASSESSMENT

## Health Risk Rating

High

## Travel Health Advice

Routine vaccines for preventable diseases, such as measles/mumps/rubella (MMR) vaccine, diphtheria/pertussis/tetanus (DPT) vaccine, chickenpox (or varicella), poliovirus vaccine, etc. are recommended for all travelers.

Protect against insect bites and insect-borne diseases, such as tick-borne encephalitis or malaria, by using insect repellent and wearing long pants, long sleeve shirts, boots, and hats if possible. See more detailed insect precautions below.

Prevent foodborne illnesses by avoiding undercooked foods and unpasteurized dairy products and washing hands, especially before eating. See more detailed food and beverage precautions below.

A comprehensive pre-travel health consultation with a travel health care provider is recommended for all travelers in order to optimize their health while traveling and to individualize their disease prevention strategies to best mitigate the health risks of any destination.

## Immunizations - Required for Entry

The following vaccines are required for travelers entering the country. Some vaccines may only be required for travelers arriving from specific destinations, or those who have previously traveled to specific destinations within a given time period. Travelers are advised to consult with their travel healthcare provider for traveler-specific requirements.

Immunization	Notes
Polio	<p>Polio is a viral disease spread between humans through both fecal-oral and oral-oral routes. Mechanisms include the ingestion of fecal-contaminated food or water, contact with infected feces, and through contact with the respiratory secretions of an infected person.</p> <p>All persons should be vaccinated against poliovirus. In the US, only inactivated polio vaccine (IPV) is used, while in other parts of the world, oral polio vaccine (OPV) is still used. A single lifetime booster dose of IPV is recommended for adults traveling to at-risk areas, even if they received routine vaccination as children. Those with unknown vaccination status, or who did not complete polio vaccination as children, should complete a routine vaccination series.</p> <p>Certain countries have implemented a polio vaccine requirement upon entry to or exit from the country. Certain countries also have recommendations for polio vaccination in specific circumstances. Travelers to these countries should carry a yellow card with appropriate polio vaccination recorded. Polio vaccine recommendations and requirements in these countries are in flux; consult with a travel health provider to determine if vaccination is recommended or required for your itinerary.</p>



<b>Yellow Fever (YF)</b>	<p>YF is a viral infection spread through the bite of an infected mosquito.</p> <p>A requirement for YF vaccine is present in many countries to prevent travelers from bringing the virus into the country. This requirement in some cases applies even to airport transfers in countries with YF transmission risk.</p> <p>A travel health professional can advise if YF vaccine is indicated for a specific travel itinerary. YF vaccine can be given to most adults and children over 9 months, and should be administered at least 10 days before travel. YF vaccine is considered effective for life; however, there is some uncertainty regarding universal country recognition of this lifetime validity.</p>
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## Immunizations - General

The following immunizations are recommended for travel to all destinations.

Immunization	Notes
<b>Routine</b>	Routine vaccines for preventable diseases, such as measles/mumps/rubella (MMR) vaccine, diphtheria/pertussis/tetanus (DPT) vaccine, chickenpox (or varicella), poliovirus vaccine, etc. are recommended for all travelers.
<b>Hepatitis B</b>	<p>Hepatitis B is spread through contact with infected blood, sexual relations, and contact with contaminated needles.</p> <p>There are several pre-exposure vaccination options available: PEDIARIX (pediatric formulation containing DTaP, HepA/B, and polio vaccines), TWINRIX (3 dose HepA/HepB combination series), ENGERIX-B, RECOMBIVAX HB (3 doses); Heplisav-B (2 doses). The full course of injections is recommended prior to travel. Unvaccinated travelers who have been exposed to HBV should seek medical attention immediately. They should receive a dose of Hep B vaccine within 24 hours of the exposure, and may benefit from treatment with Hep B immunoglobulin as well.</p>
<b>Influenza</b>	<p>All types of Influenza are spread between humans by respiratory droplets through sneezing, coughing, and touching objects contaminated with the virus.</p> <p>There are 2 types of pre-exposure vaccinations available: Inactivated Influenza Vaccine (IIV), and Live Intranasal Influenza Vaccine (LAIV). IIV is injected into the upper arm or thigh, and LAIV is administered as a nasal spray. Components of the vaccine change yearly, depending on anticipated circulating strains of the virus, which vary by hemisphere. Vaccination is recommended annually for all persons at least 6 months of age, prior to transmission season.</p>

## Immunizations - Recommended for this Country

The following are vaccine preventable diseases present in this country. Some travelers may be at an increased risk of exposure to specific diseases. Travelers are advised to consult with their travel healthcare provider for traveler- and itinerary- specific recommendations.

Immunization	Notes
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<b>Hepatitis A Virus (HAV)</b>	<p>The Hepatitis A virus is primarily transmitted through contaminated water and food such as shellfish and uncooked vegetables or fruit prepared by infected food handlers. It is also transmitted through person-to-person contact via fecal-oral exposure, or spread through sexual relations, blood transfusions, and needles.</p> <p>Several pre-exposure vaccination options are available: HAVRIX, VAQTA, TWINRIX (3-dose HepA/HepB combination series), and AVAXIM. The vaccine requires 2 doses, separated by a minimum of 6 months. Ideally, the traveler should complete both doses at least 2 weeks prior to travel. However, if there is insufficient lead time to travel, the first injection should be administered before departure and a booster after 6 months. Once both doses are completed, immunity is considered lifelong.</p>
<b>Typhoid Fever</b>	<p>Typhoid is a bacterial infection spread through the ingestion of contaminated food or water.</p> <p>Vaccination should be completed 1-2 weeks before travel, depending on the form of the vaccine given. Two forms of the vaccine are available: an inactivated shot (1 dose), and a live oral vaccine (4 capsules given over 8 days). Booster doses of vaccine are needed for ongoing protection. The interval will vary depending on the form of the vaccine and the traveler's country of vaccination. Vaccination recommendations vary by country, activities, and specific itinerary. Consult a travel health professional for individual advice.</p>
<b>Hepatitis B Virus (HBV)</b>	<p>Hepatitis B is spread through contact with infected blood, sexual relations, and contact with contaminated needles.</p> <p>There are several pre-exposure vaccination options available: PEDIARIX (pediatric formulation containing DTaP, HepA/B, and polio vaccines), TWINRIX (3 dose HepA/HepB combination series), ENGERIX-B, RECOMBIVAX HB (3 doses); Heplisav-B (2 doses). The full course of injections is recommended prior to travel. Unvaccinated travelers who have been exposed to HBV should seek medical attention immediately. They should receive a dose of Hep B vaccine within 24 hours of the exposure, and may benefit from treatment with Hep B immunoglobulin as well. Vaccination is routine in the US and many other countries. Previously unvaccinated travelers should consider vaccination for travel to areas with high risk of HBV infection, or if they anticipate needing medical/dental care abroad, being exposed to needles, or engaging in sexual activity.</p>
<b>Rabies</b>	<p>Rabies is spread through the bite or scratch of an infected animal. All mammals are susceptible, but dogs and other wildlife (particularly bats) are the most common vectors.</p> <p>A 3-dose pre-exposure rabies vaccine is recommended for long-term travelers and expatriates visiting remote areas. It is also recommended for travelers involved in adventure or outdoor activities in remote areas who could be exposed to bats, dogs, and other mammals and those who might be in direct contact with animals, including in urban areas. Children are at higher risk and have a lower threshold for pre-exposure vaccination. The first dose of the vaccine should be administered at least 21 days before travel.</p>

<b>Influenza Virus (Flu)</b>	<p>Classic, or seasonal, influenza, is a highly contagious respiratory infection, caused by 2 types of virus: A and B. All types of Influenza are spread between humans by respiratory droplets through sneezing, coughing, and touching objects contaminated with the virus.</p> <p>There are 2 types of pre-exposure vaccinations available: Inactivated Influenza Vaccine (IIV), and Live Intranasal Influenza Vaccine (LAIV). IIV is injected into the upper arm or thigh, and LAIV is administered as a nasal spray. Components of the vaccine change yearly, depending on anticipated circulating strains of the virus, which vary by hemisphere. Vaccination is recommended annually for all persons at least 6 months of age, prior to transmission season.</p>
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## Health Risks

The following are health risks present in the country. Some of these health risks are widespread, while others may only affect travelers in specific areas or those engaging in specific activities. Travelers are advised to consult with their travel healthcare provider for traveler- and itinerary-specific recommendations.

Health Risks	Notes
<b>Air Pollution</b>	<p>Air pollution refers to the potentially hazardous mix of particulate matter, chemicals, and other materials that infiltrates the air and causes acute symptoms and chronic conditions. Acute symptoms include itching of the eyes, nose, and throat, as well as wheezing, coughing, shortness of breath, chest pain, headaches, nausea, and upper respiratory infections (bronchitis and pneumonia). Air pollution is increasing in low- and middle- income countries and has become a major concern for travelers.</p> <p>Travelers with chronic lung conditions such as asthma or chronic obstructive pulmonary disease COPD should consult with their physicians prior to travel to areas with poor air quality, and these populations should reduce outdoor exertion. Elderly travelers and infants are also more at risk for respiratory consequences of exposure to air pollution. All travelers should comply with air pollution advisories. Levels of air pollution will vary by city and region; check current levels prior to travel to appropriately target preventive measures.</p>

<b>Dengue Fever</b>	<p>Dengue fever is a mosquito-borne viral infection. Symptoms include headache, sudden-onset fever, rash, and joint pain. Some cases progress to severe dengue, when significant bleeding, fluid shifts, and end organ damage can appear.</p> <p>Dengue fever is spread through the bite of an infected Aedes mosquito. The Aedes mosquito, which carries dengue fever, typically lives indoors in dark, cool places like closets, under beds, bathrooms, and behind curtains, as well as around standing water. Aedes are daytime biters, with highest activity 2-3 hours after dawn and mid-to-late afternoon. Aedes mosquitos are active in both urban and rural environments.</p> <p>There is no vaccine to prevent dengue fever. Use daytime insect precautions (see Insect Precautions below). Although there is no specific treatment for Dengue Fever, persons with suspected illness should seek medical care for definitive diagnosis. Dengue Fever does not usually require hospitalization; however, close clinical monitoring is needed to allow early intervention if complications occur.</p>
<b>Hepatitis E</b>	<p>Hepatitis E is a viral infection causing liver inflammation. Most of those infected are asymptomatic or have only mild symptoms, which can include non-specific gastrointestinal symptoms, jaundice, dark urine, and fever.</p> <p>In developing countries, Hepatitis E is transmitted through the fecal-oral route, most often through contaminated water. Other modes of transmission include consuming raw or undercooked pork or game meat, and shellfish. Human-to-human transmission is uncommon. Pregnant women, those with liver disease, and immunosuppressed persons are at risk of more severe and chronic infection.</p> <p>There is a vaccine to prevent against Hepatitis E, but it is only available in China. Adhere to recommended food and water precautions (see below). Only eat meat that has been cooked well and thoroughly. Practice good hand washing and body hygiene. No specific antiviral medication is available to treat Hepatitis E. Supportive care is usually sufficient while the infection resolves.</p>

<b>Leishmaniasis</b>	<p>Leishmaniasis is a parasitic disease caused by several species of Leishmania protozoa. Three clinical syndromes result, depending on causative species: cutaneous, mucosal, and visceral (the most severe). Travelers most often are affected by the cutaneous form, usually with ulcerating skin lesions and swollen glands, and experience self-limited disease.</p> <p>Leishmaniasis is spread through the bite of an infected sandfly. Risk of acquiring the disease is higher among adventure travelers, eco-tourists, missionaries, military personnel, construction workers, and those working outdoors at night or sleeping outdoors.</p> <p>There is no vaccine to prevent Leishmaniasis. Follow insect precautions (see below), and avoid nighttime outdoor activities if possible. Most sandflies bite from dusk to dawn, but in the Western hemisphere, sandflies bite both day and night. Be aware that the mesh on any protective netting must be of a finer weave than the norm for prevention of mosquito bites. For netting to be effective against sandflies, it must have at least 18 holes per linear inch (2.54 cm). Impregnated nets and screens are most effective. Treatment decisions are multifactorial and can include local wound care and medications.</p>
<b>Malaria</b>	<p>Malaria is caused by a protozoan parasite that lives within red blood cells. Malaria is a very serious and potentially fatal disease. Symptoms include fever, chills, headache, and muscle aches. Vomiting, diarrhea, and abdominal pain also occur. Severe forms of the disease can lead to cerebral malaria, kidney failure, shock, and death.</p> <p>Malaria is spread through the bite of an infected Anopheles mosquito, which is active between dusk to dawn. Risk varies widely, even within a country, and depends on the traveler's itinerary, sleeping accommodations, urban vs rural travel, and elevation, among other factors.</p> <p>There is no vaccine to prevent against malaria. Observe nighttime insect precautions (see below). Malaria prophylaxis medications are often recommended for travel to endemic areas. Consult with a travel health professional for specific advice. Seek medical care immediately if malaria infection is suspected. Treatment with antimalarial medications is effective.</p>
<b>Middle East Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus (MERS-CoV)</b>	<p>MERS is an acute respiratory syndrome caused by a coronavirus. Symptoms include fever, cough, and difficulty breathing. Kidney failure can occur in severe cases. MERS has a case fatality of more than 30%.</p> <p>The virus is transmitted through exposure to respiratory secretions and body fluids of infected camels. Human-to-human transmission also occurs, especially in hospital settings via direct contact with contaminated surfaces. Risk to travelers is low. Healthcare workers in contact with MERS patients, and those who are immunosuppressed or chronically ill, are at higher risk.</p> <p>There is no vaccine currently available and no specific treatment for the virus. Travelers should avoid physical contact with wild or farm animals and camels, and consumption of camel products (unpasteurized milk, urine, and improperly cooked meat). Practice good personal and hand hygiene. There is no specific treatment for MERS. Seek medical attention promptly if you suspect infection with the MERS virus.</p>

<b>Schistosomiasis (Bilharzia)</b>	<p>Schistosomiasis is a parasitic infection caused by flatworms. Symptoms of initial infection can include skin rash, fever, headache, muscle ache, bloody diarrhea, cough, malaise, and abdominal pain, but many of those infected are asymptomatic. Schistosomiasis can become a chronic illness with varied manifestations if untreated.</p> <p>Schistosomiasis is spread via larvae that swim in fresh water, and through sexual contact with infected individuals. Travelers become infected by bathing, swimming, boating, or rafting in cercariae-infested waters.</p> <p>There is no vaccine to prevent against schistosomiasis. Avoid contact with bodies of freshwater in endemic areas. Schistosomiasis cannot be contracted in chlorinated swimming pools or in bodies of salt water. The use of insect repellent may be effective but is unreliable. Travelers who come in contact with bodies of fresh water should wear protective footwear and clothing, and clean their skin with rubbing alcohol and a clean, dry towel. Schistosomiasis can be treated with anti-helminthic medication.</p>
<b>Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs)</b>	<p>STIs are a concern for travelers worldwide, and are likely underreported as a travel-related infection. STIs are caused by viruses, bacteria, and parasites, the same potential pathogens as are present in the traveler's home environment. However, certain infections like chancroid, LGV, and Granuloma inguinale are more common in less industrialized countries, and other areas of the world have higher incidence of HIV and Hepatitis B and C than others. Symptoms vary widely depending on the specific infection, and can include both local and systemic symptoms.</p> <p>STIs are spread between humans by unprotected sexual contact (oral, anal, or vaginal), and skin-to-skin genital contact. Some STIs can also be transmitted through exposure to blood and other bodily fluids. Travelers are at higher risk if engaging in sex with sex workers, traveling for sex tourism, or certain higher risk behaviors. Healthcare workers are at higher risk for certain blood-borne infections.</p> <p>Preventive measures focus on decreasing exposure to STI pathogens. Adhere strictly to safe sex practices: use a condom correctly and consistently, or abstain from intercourse, and use an external condom or dental dam for oral exposures. Travelers should pack external and/or internal condoms, as the quality of condoms available in some areas is not reliable. Avoid behavior that increases the risk of contracting an STI such as casual sex with a stranger or a sex worker. Drinking heavily or taking mind-altering drugs will impair judgement and inhibitions during a sexual encounter, increasing the risk of making unsafe choices. Seek medical attention promptly if an STI is suspected.</p>

<b>Helminths - Soil Transmission</b>	<p>Soil-transmitted helminths include the human hookworms <i>Ancylostoma</i> and <i>Necator</i>, and <i>Strongyloides</i>. These helminths penetrate the skin, then migrate through the body through species-dependent pathways to end up settling in the GI tract. Many of those infected have no symptoms. If present, symptoms vary depending on the phase of life cycle within the human host: rash and skin lesions, mild cough, and non-specific gastrointestinal symptoms.</p> <p>Transmission occurs through skin penetration by infective larvae found in fecally contaminated soil and sand in affected areas, usually when walking barefoot or lying directly on the ground. Transmission is more common in areas with poor sanitary practices. Travelers are at higher risk in moist, jungle environments and along the shoreline of tropical and subtropical beaches.</p> <p>There is no vaccine to prevent against helminth infection. Travelers are advised to avoid walking barefoot on beaches or other soil, wash feet after contact with sand, and to always sit on a protective surface to avoid contact between skin and sand/soil. Treatment is with anti-helminthic medication and symptomatic care.</p>
<b>Travelers' Diarrhea</b>	<p>Travelers' diarrhea (TD) is the most common health problem for travelers, affecting up to 70% of travelers going to developing countries. TD is caused primarily by pathogenic bacteria and less commonly by protozoa or enteric viruses. Symptoms include diarrhea, fever, abdominal pain, nausea, and vomiting. More severe forms of TD include dysentery and diarrhea with blood and mucus present.</p> <p>TD is transmitted to humans by the ingestion of contaminated food and water. Individuals at higher risk for TD or adverse consequences include adventurous eaters, immunocompromised persons, persons with inflammatory bowel disease or diabetes, and those taking medications that decrease gastric acidity.</p> <p>There is no vaccine to prevent TD. Following food and beverage precautions may reduce the likelihood of illness (see below). Travelers should carry loperamide for self-treatment of diarrhea and azithromycin to add if diarrhea is severe.</p>
<b>Marine Hazards</b>	<p>Marine hazards are varied and include exposures to challenging tides and currents, hazards of watersports and boating, as well as contact with plants and animals that can injure humans. Most commonly seen in travelers are envenomation or stings from jellyfish, sea urchins, certain corals, stonefish, sting rays, and sea urchins.</p> <p>Travelers should seek out and heed posted warnings and refrain from bathing or other aquatic activities at unmarked, unpatrolled beaches.</p>

<b>Brucellosis</b>	<p>Brucellosis is a bacterial disease that primarily affects domestic and wild animals, but can be transmitted to humans through contact with skin, conjunctiva, GI, and respiratory tracts. Brucellosis is a systemic infection and usually presents with fever, joint and muscle aches, weakness and fatigue, headache, and loss of appetite. A myriad of other more focal symptoms can also occur.</p> <p>In travelers, brucellosis is most commonly acquired through the ingestion of unpasteurized dairy products. Others at potential risk include those with close contact with infected animals or their tissues, including hunters.</p> <p>There is no vaccine available to immunize humans against brucellosis. Travelers should avoid consumption of unpasteurized dairy products, including fresh goat cheese and other goat products, and use rubber gloves if it is necessary to handle animal tissue or viscera. Brucellosis can be treated with antibiotics. Seek medical attention for potential illness.</p>
<b>Crimean-Congo Hemorrhagic Fever (CCHF)</b>	<p>CCHF is caused by a bunyavirus and is a zoonotic disease. Many infected individuals are asymptomatic. Those who become ill may present with fever, fever, sore muscles, dizziness, neck pain and stiffness, backache, headache, sore eyes and photophobia, mood swings, and aggression. The disease progresses to bleeding and bruising in mucus membranes and skin, and then in internal organs. CCHF can be fatal.</p> <p>CCHF is spread through tick bites and through contact with infected animals or animal tissue. Activities that increase risk for CCHF include outdoor activities in endemic areas (camping, hiking, etc.), or contact with livestock. In general, risk to travelers is low.</p> <p>There is no vaccine to prevent against CCHF. Those engaging in outdoor activities in endemic areas should observe insect precautions with particular attention to preventing tick bites (see Insect Precautions below). Visitors working with livestock or other animals in endemic areas should wear gloves or other barriers to keep their skin from coming into contact with infected animals, as they often serve as hosts for ticks. Special protective clothing is indicated for healthcare workers caring for patients with CCHF. Seek medical advice immediately if CCHF is suspected. Some patients may benefit from antiviral treatment, and more severely affected patients will need intensive supportive care.</p>



<b>Plague</b>	<p>Plague is a bacterial disease that can lead to 3 forms of disease: bubonic plague affecting the lymph nodes, septicemic plague in the bloodstream, and pneumonic plague affecting the lungs. Symptoms will vary depending on which form of the disease is present, and can include, fever, swollen and painful lymph nodes, abdominal pain, pneumonia, and bleeding.</p> <p>The plague is typically spread through the bite of infected rodent fleas. It is sometimes spread through the inhalation of infected animal secretions, or by handling infected animal tissue. Rarely, person-to-person spread can occur if pneumonic plague is present. Risk to travelers is generally low. Hikers, campers, hunters, and persons exposed to wild rodents in endemic areas are at higher risk.</p> <p>There is no vaccine to prevent against the plague. Measures should be taken to prevent against contact with rodents and other potentially infected animals. Prevent flea bites with insect repellent and protective clothing. Travelers should avoid crowds and coughing persons in areas where pneumonic plague has been reported. Those who may have had contact with an infected person, rodent, or other animal should receive antibiotic prophylactic treatment. Infected persons need immediate antibiotic treatment due to the high risk of death.</p>
<b>Tuberculosis (TB)</b>	<p>TB is caused by infection with the Mycobacterium tuberculosis bacteria. Over 95% of cases occur in developing countries, and infection is strongly associated with poverty, overcrowding, and malnutrition. TB infection can be latent, with no symptoms, for many years. The most common clinical presentation of active TB is pulmonary TB, with symptoms of cough, night sweats, weight loss, bloody sputum, and fatigue.</p> <p>Tuberculosis is spread through contact with the respiratory secretions of an infected person. It can also be acquired by eating unpasteurized dairy products in areas where the bovine form of TB is endemic.</p> <p>The Bacillus Calmette-Guérin (BCG) vaccine has historically been used at birth in most developing countries to prevent against TB. Results in adults have varied with effectiveness of between 0-80 percent. It is not recommended for travelers. The BCG vaccine is also reported to interfere with TB testing in some cases. Individuals who anticipate prolonged exposure to TB areas should undergo the tuberculin skin test (TST) or interferon-γ release assay (IGRA) both before leaving the US and 8-10 weeks after returning from travel. Treatment for TB is complex; seek medical care for concerns of TB infection.</p>

<b>Melioidosis</b>	<p>Melioidosis infection is caused by Burkholderia bacteria found in soil and water. Acute symptoms include fever, cough, chest pain, and shortness of breath. Localized skin infections also occur, as well as systemic forms of infection. Melioidosis can be fatal.</p> <p>Melioidosis is spread through direct contact with sources, usually water and soil, that are contaminated with the bacterium. Transmission occurs primarily through direct inoculation through the skin, contamination of wounds, and inhalation and aspiration, most often in the setting of recent rains, floods, or severe weather events. Ecotourists, adventure travelers, and persons working in agriculture, mining, and construction are at risk.</p> <p>There is no vaccine to prevent melioidosis. Avoid contact with pools of standing water, soil, or mud in endemic areas. Wear long pants, boots, and gloves if in contact with soil or an area of standing water. Clean wounds thoroughly and use an antiseptic cleanser. Seek medical care promptly if melioidosis infection is suspected for antibiotic treatment and other effective care.</p>
<b>Snakebites</b>	<p>Snakebites are an important cause of morbidity and mortality for rural populations in tropical and subtropical areas. Risk of snakebites exists in areas with dense vegetation or rock formation, and snakes are more active in warm weather. Despite this prevalence in resident populations, travelers rarely experience snakebites. Symptoms of snakebites depend on the degree of envenomation, which varies based on species of snake, the volume of venom injected (many bites from venomous snakes are dry), and the weight and size of the victim.</p> <p>Avoid close contact with snakes and do not attempt to handle them. Back away if a snake is disturbed and wait for it to move away. When hiking or trekking in a high risk country, travelers should wear boots and long pants, avoid tall grass if possible, walk slowly, and use a stick ahead to beat the vegetation. Do not reach into holes or cracks between rocks. Sleep under a bed net when camping. Use a flashlight if walking after dark. Seek medical attention immediately after any snakebite. Immediate first aid includes keeping the victim calm and quiet, and immobilizing the limb involved.</p>
<b>Avian Flu</b>	<p>Avian flu is caused by several subtypes of influenza A virus found in birds and domestic poultry. Travelers are at risk when visiting areas where avian flu is present, especially if in direct contact with birds/poultry, visiting live bird markets, or consuming undercooked poultry.</p> <p>Humans become infected through direct contact with sick or infected birds or their droppings. No evidence of sustained human-to-human transmission exists.</p> <p>There is no vaccination to prevent avian flu. Travelers to affected areas should avoid direct contact with birds (including domestic poultry), live animal markets and poultry farms, and avoid consumption of poultry. Observe hand and respiratory hygiene.</p>

## Medical Facilities and Services

Medical facilities in large cities, particularly Tehran, usually offer good-quality care. More rural areas do not have well-maintained or secure facilities. Shortages of basic medical supplies are common.

Serious illness or injury may require evacuation to the nearest qualified facility, typically the United Arab Emirates. Most doctors and hospitals require payment in cash. Individuals should travel with adequate amounts of prescription medication necessary for their intended stay.

### **Food and Water Safety**

Avoid eating raw or undercooked meat, poultry, seafood, or eggs. Avoid eating unwashed or unpeeled fruits/vegetables, fruits/vegetables that have been washed with contaminated water, unpasteurized dairy products, and bush or game meat. Avoid eating food that is not properly refrigerated or cooled, or that has been left standing and uncovered. Avoid eating leafy or uncooked vegetables and salads.

Tap water in Iran is generally not considered potable. Only drink water that has been filtered or boiled, or has come in a sealed bottle. Avoid drinking any well water unless you can verify its quality. Do not drink beverages that contain ice unless you can confirm that the ice is from purified water. Do not drink unpasteurized milk or juice, or anything mixed with contaminated water. Hot coffee or tea is usually safe to drink.

Wash hands with soap or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer prior to eating. Do not use tap water to brush teeth unless you can verify the quality of the water. Avoid sharing beverages or utensils with others.

### **Insect Precautions**

Use insect repellent: DEET 20 - 30% or Picaridin 20% on exposed skin. Re-apply per manufacturer's directions.

Avoid scented soaps, hair products, deodorants, perfumes, and shaving products.

Wear long sleeves and pants tucked into socks. Wear neutral colors (beige, light gray). Always wear shoes, both indoors and outdoors.

Treat outer clothing with permethrin.

Remove any containers holding water, both inside and outside any building.

Avoid insect exposure using additional various methods depending on the insect:

- For nighttime flying insects, sleep under bed nets, preferably insecticide impregnated.
- For ticks, hike in the middle of the trail and avoid tall grasses and shrubs, use a tarp when sitting on grass, perform regular tick checks on your body and clothing.
- For other insect vectors, avoid direct contact with animals, and avoid overcrowded, unsanitary conditions to reduce risk of exposure to body lice, mites, fleas, and rodents.

## DESTINATION DETAILS

### Time Zones

From 22 September 2022 to 22 March 2023, Iran Standard Time (IRST): GMT +3:30 hours  
From 22 March 2023 to 22 September 2023, Iran Daylight Time (IRDT): GMT +4:30 hours  
From 22 September 2023 to 22 March 2024, Iran Standard Time (IRST): GMT +3:30 hours

### Currency

Iranian rial (IRR)

### Credit Cards

Credit cards from many countries, including the United States, cannot be used in Iran.

### ATMs

Foreign debit cards cannot be used in Iran, and travelers' checks cannot be cashed. Travelers should bring enough hard currency, preferably the US dollar (USD) and the euro (EUR), to last for their intended stay. Money can be exchanged at authorized exchange shops (locally known as Sarrafi) which can be found at the airport and in major cities. Notes should be in good conditions and without anything written or stamped on them, and large notes (USD/EUR 100 or larger) tend to be preferred. Do not change money on the street as it is illegal.

**NOTE:** Any attempt to access an American bank account from Iran will likely cause the US government to freeze that account due to US sanctions against Iran.

### Banking Hours

From Saturday to Wednesday 07:30-15:30 and Thursday 07:30-13:30. Friday is a public holiday. Hours may vary by bank and location.

### Major Holidays

Services and transportation may be affected on/around the following holidays:

Date	Holiday
06 January 2022	Martyrdom of Fatima
11 February 2022	Victory of Islamic Revolution
25 February 2022	Imam Ali Birthday
01 March 2022	Prophet's Ascension
21-24 March 2022	Norooz (Persian New Year)
29 March 2022	Birthday of Imam Mahdi
23 April 2022	Imam Ali's Martyrdom
03-04 May 2022	Eid al-Fitr (End of Ramadan)
27 May 2022	Martyrdom of Imam Sadeq

10 July 2022	Eid al-Ghorban (Feast of Sacrifice)
18 July 2022	Eid al-Ghadeer
07 August 2022	Tassoua
08 August 2022	Ashura
17 September 2022	Arbaeen
25 September 2022	Demise of Prophet Muhammad and Martyrdom of Imam Hassan
04 October 2022	Imam Hasan al-Askari Martyrdom
22 December 2022	Birthday of Prophet Muhammad and Imam Sadeq

**NOTE:** No elections are scheduled to take place in 2022.

## **Voltage Information**

230V, 50Hz - Plug Type C

## International Airports

Airport Name	Airport Code	Airport Location
Abadan International Airport	ABD	Abadan
Ahwaz International Airport	AWZ	Ahvaz
Tehran Imam Khomeini International Airport	IKA	Ahmadabad
Bandar Abbas International Airport	BND	Bandar Abbas
Birjand International Airport	XBJ	Birjand
Konarak International Airport	ZBR	Chabahar
Hamedan International Airport	HDM	Hamadan
Isfahan International Airport	IFN	Isfahan
Karagandy International Airport (Sary-Arka Airport)	KGF	Karaganda/Karagandy
Kerman International Airport	KER	Kerman
Kish International Airport	KIH	Kish Island
Larestan International Airport	LRR	Lar
Mashhad International Airport	MHD	Mashhad
Qeshm International Airport	GSM	Qeshm Island
Dasht-e Naz International Airport	SRY	Sari
Shiraz International Airport	SYZ	Shiraz
Tabriz International Airport	TBZ	Tabriz
Mehrabad International Airport	THR	Tehran
Urmia Airport	OMH	Urmia
Shahid Sadooghi Airport	AZD	Yazd

## ENTRY & EXIT REQUIREMENTS

The following information is for citizens of the United States. If you are a citizen of a country other than the United States, contact an embassy or consulate for up-to-date requirements. For additional questions regarding entry/exit requirements, contact Global Rescue at (+1) (617) 459-4200.

A passport, valid for six months beyond the length of stay, and a visa are required for travel to Iran, except if traveling to Kish Island, where no visa is necessary for stays up to 14 days. Otherwise a visa must be acquired from the Iranian Interests Section of the Embassy of Pakistan in Washington, DC prior to arrival. Do not attempt to enter mainland Iran from Kish Island without a visa. A visa does not guarantee entry and travelers have been denied entry without explanation. Proof of vaccination against yellow fever vaccination is also required when arriving from a yellow-fever-endemic country.

It is possible to extend a visa but the process is time-consuming. The application for a visa extension must be filed at least one week before the visa expires. Travelers will face a fine of IRR 300,000 or 30,000 tomans for each day of unauthorized stay in the country.

Dual US-Iranian citizens are recognized by the Iranian government to be citizens of Iran only and may have their US passports confiscated. Dual US-Iranian nationals are subject to different restrictions and should research requirements based on their circumstances. Some elements of Iranian law enforcement and border control services continue to harass, arrest, and detain US citizens, particularly dual nationals.

Some travelers, among them academics, scientists, journalists, have had difficulty leaving the country while others have been detained or interrogated on unknown or various charges, including espionage and being a threat to the government. Travelers whose domicile is outside Iran who stay in Iran longer than six months need to obtain an exit permit in order to leave the country.

### IMPORT RESTRICTIONS

**The following items are prohibited:**

- Illegal drugs;
- alcoholic beverages;
- firearms;
- ammunition;
- explosives;
- knives and other deadly weapons;
- gambling materials;
- short wave radios;
- fruit;
- vegetables;
- plant and plant products;
- food products;
- pork products;
- soil;
- birds;
- material determined to be against Iran's interests;

- counterfeit currency/goods;
- all writings and publications that are against Islam; and,
- pornographic material.

**The following items are permitted:**

- 200 cigarettes;
- 50 cigars;
- 250 grams of tobacco;
- perfume that can be imported in amounts reasonable for personal use; and,
- imported gifts must not have a value exceeding USD 80.

**The following restrictions apply:**

- Cats, dogs, and other pets require a veterinarian health certificate and a rabies certificate from the country of origin.
- Communications gear, including cell phones, requires a government permit.

**EXPORT RESTRICTIONS**

**The following items are prohibited:**

- Illegal drugs;
- alcoholic beverages;
- firearms;
- ammunition;
- explosives;
- knives and other deadly weapons;
- gambling materials;
- short wave radios;
- fruit;
- vegetables;
- plant and plant products;
- food products;
- pork products;
- soil;
- birds;
- material determined to be against Iran's interests;
- counterfeit currency/goods;
- all writings and publications that are against Islam; and,
- pornographic material.

**The following restrictions apply:**

- Travelers may take only one hand knitted carpet no larger than six square meters.
- Travelers may take no more than 150 grams of gold and 3 kilograms silver.
- Travelers may export no more than IRR 500,000.



## IMPORTANT NUMBERS

<b>Intl. Country Code</b>	+98
<b>Fire</b>	125
<b>Police</b>	110
<b>Ambulance</b>	115

### Contact Information for Select Embassies

#### Swiss Embassy in Tehran: Foreign Interests Section

**NOTE:** *The United States does not have official relations with Iran, but it does have an Interests Section within the Swiss Embassy in Tehran. Consular services are therefore very limited.*

No. 39 Shahid Mousavi (Golestan 5 th), corner of Paidarfard Street,  
Pasdaran, Tehran

Telephone: (+98) 21-2254-2178 or (+98) 21-2256-5273

#### British Embassy in Tehran

172 Ferdowsi Avenue

Tehran

Telephone: (+98) 21-6405-2000

Emergency 24-Hour Telephone: (+44) 19-0851-6666

#### Australian Embassy in Tehran

No.11, Yekta St., Bahar St., Shahid Fallahi St.,

Valie Asr Avenue

Tehran

Telephone: (+98) 21-7206-8666

For other embassies, contact Global Rescue at +1 (617) 459-4200.