

OUR HEALTH

By J. M. Amberson, M.D.

STAYING HEALTHY WHILE TRAVELING ABROAD

General Information

Will you be one of the 2 million Americans traveling to Europe or Asia this year?

Everyone who applies for an American passport is automatically given a small yellow booklet labeled "International Certificate of Vaccination." You should take this document to your family doctor at least three months before your scheduled departure — it may take that long for some immunizations to attain their full effectiveness, and you should be fully protected before leaving.

The doctor, after administering the appropriate injections, will record them inside your booklet. Then the booklet must be given a stamp of approval by your local or state health officer. Guard the stamped certificate carefully; you'll need it to re-enter the United States and to be admitted to certain countries abroad.

Which shots your doctor administers will of course depend on where you're going. Some shots are demanded by law, either American or foreign or both. Others are recommended by the U.S. Public Health Service, whose specific and detailed publication, "Immunization Information for International Travel," is on file at your local passport office.

To get your copy, send 35 cents to the Superintendent of Documents, Government Print-

ing Office, Washington 25, D.C., and ask for PHS Publications No. 384.

Aside from getting your immunizations, there are other precautions to follow to safeguard your health while traveling abroad.

● Well in advance of your scheduled departure, have a thorough dental examination, and if trouble is detected, get it fixed. Nothing spoils a trip like a toothache.

● Have your doctor give you a physical checkup and write a summary of your present state of health and pertinent facts about your medical history in the space provided for this information in your "International Certificate of Vaccination."

● If you wear glasses take along a spare pair.

● Especially outside of major foreign cities, avoid raw fruit and vegetables, and make sure all your milk is pasteurized. Use only bottled water, both for drinking and brushing your teeth and for making ice cubes, until you've checked on the local supply.

● Pack a traveler's health kit. Here are my suggestions for the kit: First, include prescription medications taken for chronic conditions. Then: aspirin, cough syrup, foot powder, an eye lotion for minor eye inflammations, adhesive bandages and a germicide, an oral solution for relieving minor sore throat pain, preferably a fast acting anesthetic, one like Chloraseptic, and a medication for upset stomachs, nausea and diarrhea, Pepto-Bismol, for example.

If young children accompany you, I also suggest inclusion of a rectal thermometer in your traveler's kit.



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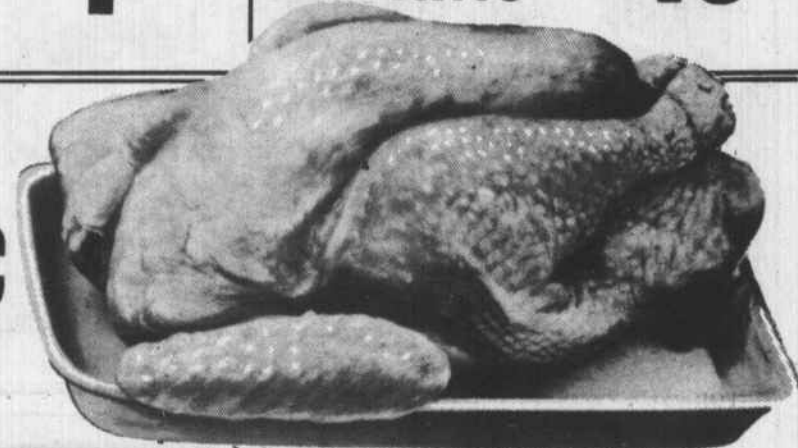
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