What is Rabies?
Rabies is a virus that enters the central nervous system and causes an inflammation of the brain and spinal cord leading to death. It is usually transmitted through a bite from an infected animal but can also be transmitted through a scratch or from exposure of mucous membranes or an open wound to saliva from an infected animal. If one of these occurs, clean the exposed area immediately with large amounts of soap and water and then seek emergency medical care. In most developing countries, dogs are the main carriers of rabies.

How do I avoid exposure?
The best way to avoid exposure is to avoid animal contact. Do not feed, pet, or approach animals. Do not pick up dead animals.

Although risk to travelers is usually low, some travelers may be advised to receive the pre-exposure rabies series. This consists of three doses of rabies vaccine prior to departure. This series takes three to four weeks to complete. If you receive the pre-exposure series and then have a possible exposure to rabies on your trip, you still need to seek medical care as soon as possible and receive TWO MORE doses of rabies vaccine. You should NOT receive rabies immune globulin (RIG) if you have received the three-dose rabies pre-exposure vaccine.

Travelers who have a potential exposure but have NOT had the pre-exposure vaccine series should seek medical attention immediately to determine if rabies is a concern in the region. Rabies immune globulin (RIG) should be administered immediately and the post-exposure rabies vaccine should be started.

Vaccine Information
In some developing countries, vaccines are made with nerve tissue from animals or mice. These vaccines should be avoided because they are not as safe or as effective as the newer cell culture-derived vaccines. If rabies immune globulin or the appropriate rabies vaccine is unavailable, contact the nearest embassy or consulate for assistance.

Cell culture vaccines available outside of the United States:
- Purified chick embryo cell vaccine (PCEC)
- Purified vero cell rabies vaccine (PVRV)
- Human diploid cell vaccine (HDCV)
- Purified duck embryo vaccine (PDEV)

For more information:
- Visit www.tripprep.com
- Call the Kaiser Permanente International Travel Clinic Staff at 303-283-2650 or 1-800-659-2656 (TTY for the deaf, hard of hearing, or speech impaired), outside of Denver/Boulder area call 1-800-888-8540.