

HEALTH CHECKS ON ARRIVAL IN AUSTRALIA

If you have just arrived here you may be keen to start learning English, put your children into school and get a job. If you take care of your physical and mental health first, all of these things will be easier to do.

Soon after you arrive in Australia, your caseworker will make appointments for you to see a Doctor. In Australia we call a family Doctor a “GP”. Even if you are not sick, it is important for you and your children to attend your first GP appointments. Checking your health is important for settling in Australia.



Background

- Many people coming to Australia have had poor access to health care overseas.
- Health problems may be due to poor diet, living conditions and unclean water.
- People may also have emotional health issues from war, loss of family and friends, and human rights abuses.

Pre-travel health checks

- Some people have had medical checks before arrival, and may have been tested for HIV, tuberculosis and other conditions like malaria.
- Some people may also have worm treatment, and vaccination for measles, mumps and rubella.
- Pre-travel health checks are often done many months before travelling, and it is possible to develop a health problem after getting the results. For this reason, some tests may be repeated after you arrive in Australia.

Why have health checks after you arrive in Australia?

- It is an important step in improving your health on arrival in Australia, as it may detect health problems you were not aware of.
- If any illness is found, you will be offered treatment if needed.
- The health worker can refer you to specialist clinics for further advice, or to services such as women’s health, dental and eye health, and counselling.

What the health check involves

The health check is for each person who arrives in Australia, including children. It may **take up to one hour or more**, and may include the following:

- Questions about your health
- Physical check up

Exceptional People. Exceptional Care.
ACN 096 708 922

Raymond Terrace, South Brisbane
Queensland 4101 Australia
Phone +61 7 3163 8111
www.mater.org.au



- Collecting blood, urine and faeces specimens
- Vaccinations.

The health worker may ask if you have any problems that might be related to experiences prior to your arrival. There are specialised services that can help you cope with these issues.

Sometimes you may need more than one visit to the clinic or doctor's office.

Vaccination is important

- To enrol in school your child needs to be fully vaccinated. The school can refuse entry if your child is not immunised.
- If your child is completing their vaccinations they may need a letter of proof from their GP to state this.
- You must ensure your child completes the course of vaccinations.
- To receive Centrelink payments, your child needs to be fully immunised.
- When people are immunised it benefits the whole community.

What should you bring with you?

- Medicare card, or number, if available
- Vaccination records and information about your medical history.
- Health Care Card

What happens after the health check?

The health worker may ask you to come back when the test results are ready. This is so that treatment and follow-up can be arranged if needed.

Confidentiality

Health checks are free and confidential, and do not affect your residency status in Australia. All results are confidential, and cannot be given to people who are not involved in your health care without your permission. Health workers are not allowed to discuss your medical problems with anyone, apart from other health care workers involved in your care.

Interpreters

If English is not your first language, an interpreter can help you to speak with health care workers and get the best health care. Please ask the health worker to book an interpreter, or to call the **Telephone Interpreter Service (TIS)** on **131 450**. The Interpreter service is free for your GP to use.

Translated Health Information www.communityhealthhub.com.au

Exceptional People. Exceptional Care.

ACN 096 708 922

Raymond Terrace, South Brisbane
Queensland 4101 Australia
Phone +61 7 3163 8111
www.mater.org.au

