

Medical and General Assistance Hotlines

Naka International Lounge

English & Chinese speaking staff can provide helpful advice on healthcare and medical services available in Yokohama.
New location next to Naka Ward Office (see pg. 2)
Tel: 045-210-0667

Foreign Resident Advisory Center

03-5320-7744
Advisory desk dispensing general information useful for living in Japan.
Mon - Fri 09:30 - 17:00 Lunch Break 12 - 1

Yokohama City Emergency Medical Information Hotline (Japanese Only)

045-201-1199
Open year-round, 24 hours

Japan Helpline

Free 24 hour advisory, assisting the international community with reliable advice and resources for 40 years. Insightful advice on medical, including AIDS testing.
team@jhelp.com
Multiple language assistance by phone
0570-000-911

Yokohama City Medical Information

www.city.yokohama.lg.jp/lang/en/o6/
(English)

Nurse's medical advice for children

045-201-1174 (Japanese only)
18:00 - midnight, Mon. to Fri. 13:00 midnight, Sat.
9:00 - midnight, Sun./National Holidays/12/29 - 1/3

Emergency After-Hours Medical Treatment Yokohama After Hours Emergency Medical Center (Yokohama-shi Yakan Kyubyo Senta)

045-212-3535 (Japanese Only)
1-1, Sakuragicho, Naka-ku
18:00 - 24:00 daily for Internal Medicine and Pediatrics
Mental Health Care Counseling Services

Tokyo English Life Line

(free, confidential telephone counseling)
03-5774-0992 Daily 9:00 - 23:00
03-4550-1146 Counseling Service in English

www.telljp.com

Free Interpretation Services
MIC Kanagawa
(Non-Profit Organization Multilingual Society Resource Kanagawa)
Dispatch of volunteer interpreters
045-314-3368
Chinese, Korean, Portuguese, Tagalog, Spanish, Thai, English available

Medical Emergency Interpreter Service

03-5285-8185
(English, Chinese, Korean, Thai) 9-8pm

Yokohama Dental Health and Medical Center

045-201-7737 (Japanese only)
(Yokohama-shi Shika Hoken Iryo Senta)
6-107, Aiioi-cho, Naka-ku
19:00 - 23:00 daily
10:00 - 16:00 on Sunday, holiday, and Dec. 29 - Jan. 4
Tokyo Inochi No Denwa - Yokohama Branch
045-335-4343 24 hours English available
045-335-4343 24 hours AIDS consultation
045-336-2477 Spanish 10:00 - 14:00, 19:00 - 21:00
Wed. Thu. Fri. Sat.
045-336-2488 Portuguese 10:00 - 21:00 Wed

AMDA International Medical Information Center

General medical information and insurance advice as well as free interpretation support.
Ask your doctor to call
03-5285-8088
English, Chinese, Spanish, Korean and Thai:
Mon - Fri 9:00 - 20:00
Portuguese: Mon, Wed, Fri 9:00 - 17:00
Tagalog: Wed 13:00 - 17:00
Vietnamese: Th: 13:00 - 17:00
http://eng.amda-amic.com/index.php

This handbook has been produced as a public service by Ippan Zaidan Hojin

The Bluff Medical and Dental Clinic

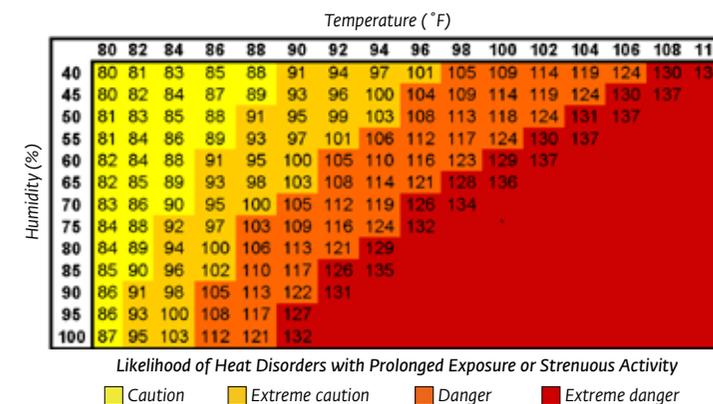
THE BLUFF Medical and Dental CLINIC
82 Yamate-cho, Naka-ku, Yokohama 231-086
Kanagawa, Japan

Tel: 045-641-6961
Fax: 045-651-5130
E-mail: medical@bluffclinic.com
www.bluffclinic.com

Understanding the Heat Index

Beware the Humidity

NOAA's National Weather Service Heat Index



ANYONE WHO HAS SURVIVED AUGUST IN JAPAN would know that humidity does indeed have an enormous effect on the comfort level. A temperature which may be pleasant enough in a dry region, becomes the dreaded steam bath which monopolizes conversation in Japan throughout the summer months when humidity rises.

We now know that the humidity factor does more than make you uncomfortable. It's a recognized risk for increase in cramps, heat exhaustion and strokes.

The hypothalamus, which controls the approximately 10 million sweat glands in an adult, tries to regulate body temperature by signaling the glands to release perspiration. It is the evaporation of sweat which extracts heat, triggering a cooling effect. Alcohol, for example, feels cool on the skin precisely because it evaporates quickly.

The Heat Index is a measure of what the temperature feels like for the body when combined with humidity. Not many people enjoy being sweaty, but it is a life-saving mechanism. So important, in fact, that over the last decade, weather stations have increasingly announced the 'heat index' as part of the weather report, much like they have been doing for the wind-chill factor in winter for decades.

The catch is, as humidity rises, the perspiration cannot vaporize as readily, due to the air already being full of moisture. At the same time, the body trying to produce up to 2 liters of sweat per hour to combat the heat means you can quickly exhaust your body fluid. Combine the two, and you have a confluence of crashing vaporization and hydration levels which can send body temperature soaring in a very short time. Rapid loss of salt can further increase risk of stroke. The first sign of thirst is often already past the danger tipping point, so stay hydrated even if you're not feeling so thirsty.

The Heat Index on an 88°F day at 80% humidity, for example, a common combination in Japanese summers, can indicate that the body feels as though it is exposed to 106 degrees temperature. Once your internal temperature reaches that level, the body can spiral into a heat stroke shutdown.

Stay cool, stay hydrated... and don't leave the children or pets in heat traps like cars in hot weather. Take a look at the heat index to help guide healthy physical exertion levels on a hot and humid day.

MUGICHA

Japan's Favorite Summer Tea

A popular Japanese refreshment which has kept the country hydrated through the years is **mugicha**, or barley tea. Made from roasted barley grains, you can purchase and brew the tea at home through slow simmering of the grains, which produces the most robust flavoring. Alternatively, most people today simply opt for the convenient tea bags used directly in cold water.

Pitchers of mugicha in the refrigerator can be found in homes across the country in summer. It can be sweetened, but most ubiquitous in its unsweetened form. Delicious, hot or cold.

Barley tea has long been used in traditional medicine for detoxification and digestion. Popular brands today also add various vitamins and minerals, making them the perfect elixir for a hot summer day.

Caution:

Barley does contain gluten, so it should be avoided by those with an allergy.



Keeping Healthy On Flights



THERE'S A LOT OF CONFUSING and contradictory information out there on how to keep healthy during flights. We spoke with some experts in the field to separate the facts from some enduring myths.

One relief for many of us should be that aircraft technology has evolved over the years so cabin air ventilation is rather more sophisticated than just a plane load of people being exposed to one rogue carrier of disease. The facts you should be aware of, however, is what researchers are learning about pathogens. Through research conducted at Auburn University, many of our most feared, such as MRSA and E.coli O157, we now know can survive for long periods on plastic, metal and fabric surfaces common in aircrafts. As a matter of fact, for many travelers, the primary route of infection is literally right at your fingertips, from which the majority are transmitted after touching contaminated surfaces right on your seat.

If your immune system is in good working order, there's little reason for concern, but it's always prudent to keep your hands clean.

Dr. Mark Gendreau, a specialist in aviation medicine at Lahey Medical Center in Massachusetts, recommends cleaning hands with a 60% alcohol sanitizing gel before eating, even if you have already washed your hands. Although the US Environmental Agency now says that the water is safe for drinking unless the passenger's immune system is compromised, numerous studies continue to find water on aircraft to be hygienically sub-standard, and touching metal faucets after usage adds to the pathogen exposure quotient.

The good news is that the feared 'airborne' pathogens, are in most instances, effectively removed by existing high-tech filters, and cabin ventilations are more efficiently compartmentalized these days. That is not to say you won't catch something from that wheezing, sneezing passenger nearby, where the filters can't do you much good. Airborne diseases like TB, for example, have been known to consistently infect passengers within two rows over a flight duration of 8 hours.

So, what are the experts recommending for your airborne defense?

Surprisingly simple: position the ventilation, set at low or medium, so as to create an air curtain falling on your lap. That, and clean hands, will go a long ways to optimal holiday health.

Happy travels!

SUMMER SEASON HEALTH TIPS

In Yokohama's culturally diverse community, summer is a time of extended home leaves and travel, particularly for families with children in the international schools.

Before any overseas travel, make sure you're up to date on any required or recommended vaccinations for your destinations.

Some medical experts are looking at events associated with El Nino and global warming trends to explain recent spikes in malaria, dengue fever and West Nile fever in some areas. Whatever the reasons, everyone would be best advised to carefully check for infectious disease outbreaks and travel advisories in the regions you are planning to visit. Be well armed with insect repellents in areas reporting recent cases.

► As we go to print, the outbreak of **MERS (Middle Eastern Respiratory Syndrome)** in Korea finally seems to have come under control, with new cases reported rapidly dwindling.

► Useful information on contagious diseases can be found on numerous travel and medical advisory sites. **WHO and Center for Disease Control** are trusted sources which would be good starting points.
www.nc.cdc.gov/travel
www.who.int/ith/

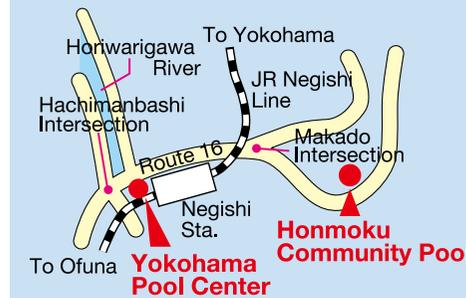
► It seems most of the Northern Hemisphere is again headed for a hot summer, so be well armed with heat protection measures. Japan, in particular, is notorious for its humidity which increases the impact of heat on our bodies, so be extra careful.

Here are some useful **hot weather tips**, many of them you're already familiar with, but worth a reminder each year:

- ◎ **Drink plenty of liquids** and keep hydrated. Don't wait until you're thirsty. People with liquid restrictions should consult their doctors for advice on avoiding dehydration.
- ◎ **Use sunscreen of 15 SPF or higher.** Make certain it offers protection for both UVA and UVB. Latest report (May 19, 2015) from researchers at CDC says that sunscreens may help prevent some skin cancers including melanoma and premature skin aging.
- ◎ **Wear clothing which offers coverage of arms and legs, where possible.** Hats are also useful for offering shade with rims, and shielding the head from UV rays. Remember loosely woven straw hats are not efficient sun blockers, and always keep exposure of neck in mind.

Wishing all of you an enjoyable, healthy summer.

BEING COOL IN POOLS



ANOTHER WAY TO KEEP COOL in summer is to head to nearby beaches west towards the Shonan area or to the less crowded sands of Chiba. Yokohama has some very attractive and reasonably priced public pools, such as the 50 meter facility shaded by the old growth trees in Motomachi Park, just across from the Bluff Clinic. Here are a few recommendations for nearby dips, though be forewarned, they can be very crowded. Avoid the hottest hours, and don't forget your sun protection.



Naka Ward International Lounge News and New Location



Naka Ward Reaches Out in English

Residents will be pleased to learn that the Naka Ward Office provides a vast range of multi-lingual (Japanese, English, Chinese) help to make your daily life as smooth and efficient as possible. Whether you're seeking information on medical care, childcare, waste disposal, taxes, welfare or housing, start with a visit to the **Naka International Lounge** (tel. 045-210-0667). For the full scope of assistance you can get, we recommend you take a look at www.city.yokohama.lg.jp/naka/english/#Important.

In the ward's latest efforts to unify the various offices for the convenience of users, the Naka International Lounge just moved to the Naka Ward Office Annex, adjacent to the Ward Office and just across the street from the Yokohama Stadium. The lounge is a one-stop source offering up-to-date information on medical care, welfare services and general support for living in Yokohama. It also actively promotes cultural exchanges among its international clientele.

