

Government Connection:
Understanding CDC Travel Health
Notices and Guidance for Travel Abroad

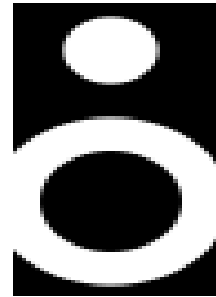
August 20th, 2PM Eastern Time



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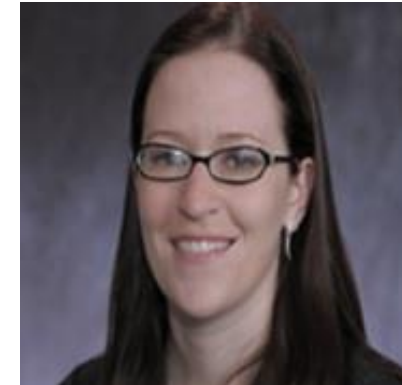
Dr. Cindy Friedman

Chief, Travelers' Health Branch, U.S.
Centers for Disease Control and
Prevention



Chris Cook

Associate Director of
International Travel Health &
Safety, Cornell University



Allison Cash Spiro



Caroline Donovan White

Agenda

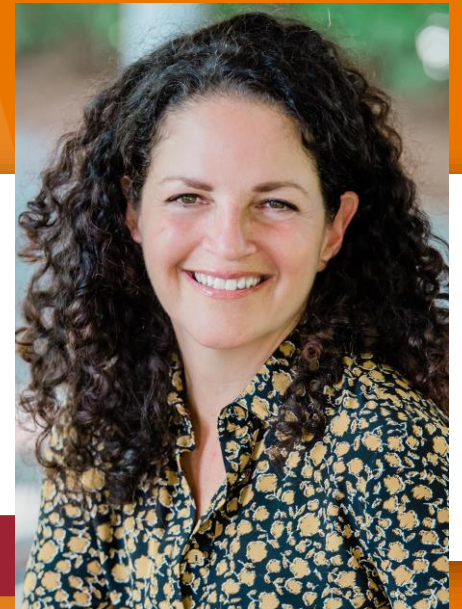


- Welcome
- Audience Poll
- Understanding CDC Travel Health Notices
- Audience Poll
- Lessons Learned, Monitoring Strategies, and Planning
- Discussion
- NAFSA Resources, Advocacy, Upcoming Events



*Please respond using the poll feature on your screen
The poll is anonymous.*

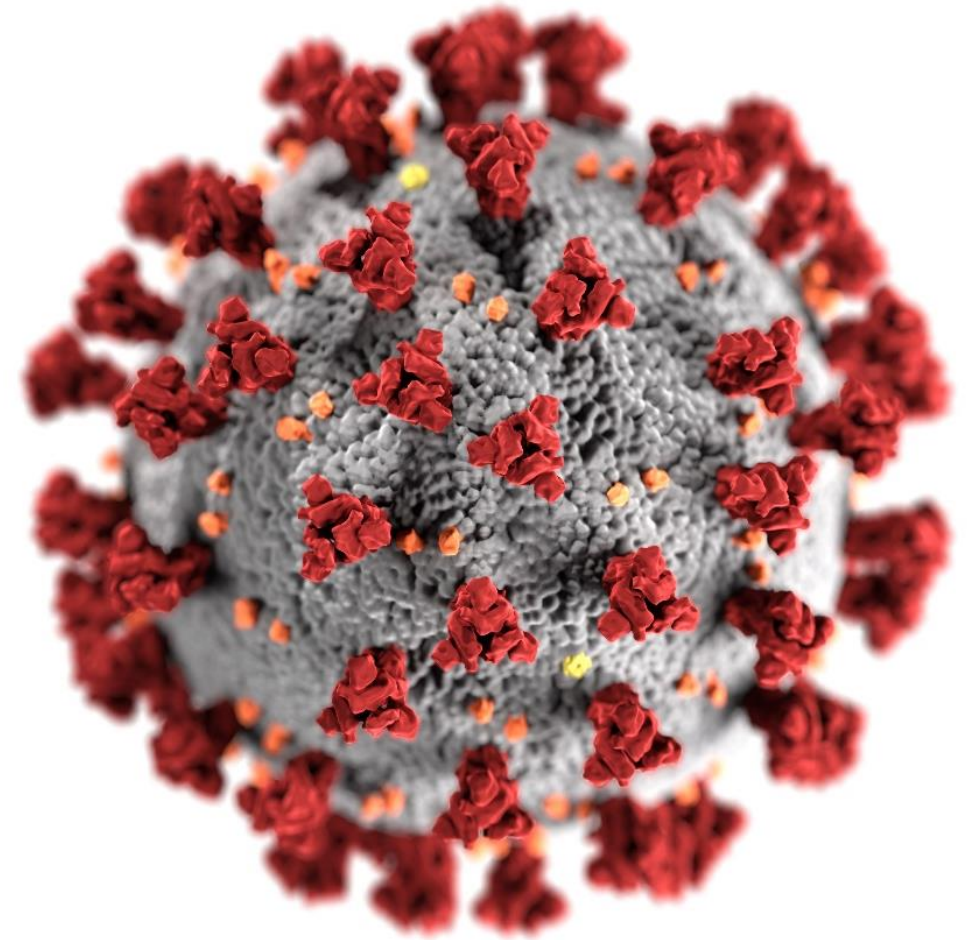
Understanding CDC Travel Health Notices



Understanding CDC Travel Health Notices and Guidance for Travel Abroad during the COVID-19 Pandemic

Cindy R. Friedman, MD
Chief, Travelers' Health Branch
Division of Global Migration and Quarantine

August 20, 2020



cdc.gov/coronavirus

Studying abroad during the COVID-19 pandemic: Countries where students are hosted may change based on risk

HOST REGIONS OF U.S. STUDY ABROAD STUDENTS



Europe hosts **over half** of U.S. study abroad students.

32% of US study abroad students were hosted by UK, Italy and Spain

* 2017/18 data from Institute of International Education 2019 Open Doors Report

Overview

- CDC's Travel Health Notices
 - History
 - Purpose
 - Levels
- Travel Health Notices during the COVID pandemic
 - Risk assessment criteria
- Considerations for study abroad in 2021
 - Risk mitigation strategy



Travel Health Notices (THNs) contain up to date information about health issues that impact travelers' health

- Target audience is US outbound travelers, clinicians, government officials, policy makers, public health partners and others
- Provide important information about outbreaks, special events or gatherings, and natural disasters, in specific international destinations

CDC notifies travelers and other audiences about health threats in destinations around the world through Travel Health Notices

- 2003: THNs developed during the Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) outbreak
- 2013: THNs refined during avian flu (H7N9) emergency response
 - country specific notices begun
- 3 levels of notice were established based on risk mitigation strategy

Three levels of notice based on risk mitigation strategy

Types of Notices

Warning Level 3

Warning Level 3 (Red): Avoid all non-essential travel to this destination. The outbreak is of high risk to travelers and no precautions are available to protect against the identified increased risk.

Alert Level 2

Alert Level 2 (Yellow): Practice enhanced precautions for this destination. The Travel Health Notice describes additional precautions added, or defines a specific at-risk population.

Watch Level 1

Watch Level 1 (Green): Practice usual precautions for this destination, as described in the Travel Health Notice and/or on the [destination page](#). This includes being up-to-date on all recommended vaccines and practicing appropriate mosquito avoidance.

March 2020: Level 3 Global COVID-19 Pandemic Notice issued

Travel Health Notices during COVID-19 pandemic are based on destination risk level

- August 2020: Transitioned to individual country risk assessments
- Based on two sets of criteria (primary and secondary), which contain information about:
 - Virus transmission within a destination (primary criteria)
 - AND
 - Healthcare capacity and public health infrastructure within a destination (secondary criteria)
- All primary criteria are assessed over the last 28 days (2 incubation periods for COVID-19)
 - The incubation period is the time between exposure to the virus to developing infection, usually 2 to 14 days for COVID-19



Primary criteria are calculated using World Health Organization COVID-19 surveillance data

COVID-19 Travel Health Notice Levels* Destinations with Populations Greater than 300,000 People

	LEVEL 3 HIGH RISK	LEVEL 2 MODERATE RISK	LEVEL 1 LOW RISK
Number of new cases	More than 500	251-500	50-250
Incidence Rate (per 100,000 people)	More than 3	1.5-3	Less than 1.5
New Case Trajectory	Accelerating or growing	Decelerating, slowing, OR stable	

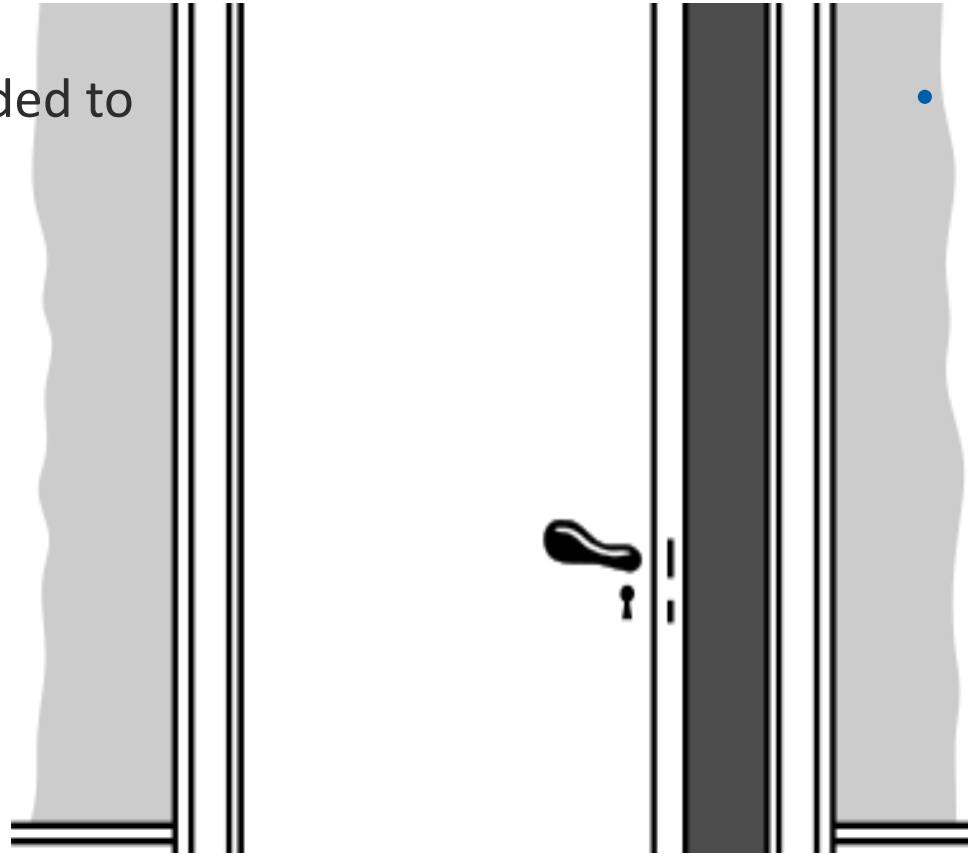
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/how-level-is-determined.html>



* All criteria are assessed over the last 28 days (2 incubation periods for COVID-19)

THN De-Escalation Mechanism

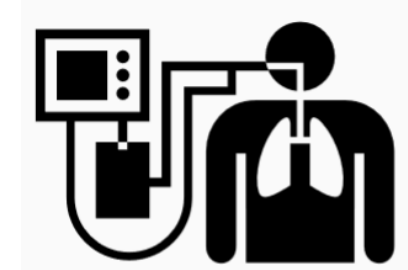
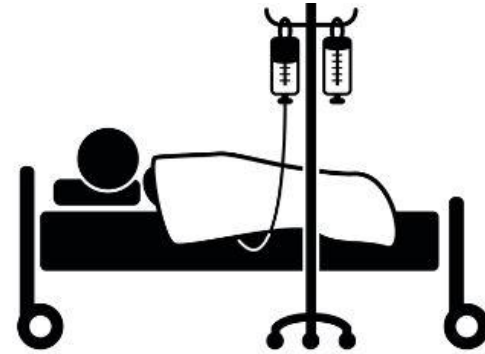
- Primary criteria – three keys needed to “open the door” to de-escalation
 - New case count
 - Incidence rate (New cases/100,000)
 - New case trajectory



- Secondary criteria must
 - Align with primary criteria
 - Confirm de-escalation is warranted

Secondary Criteria are qualitative and come from official destination sources (e.g., ministry of health websites)

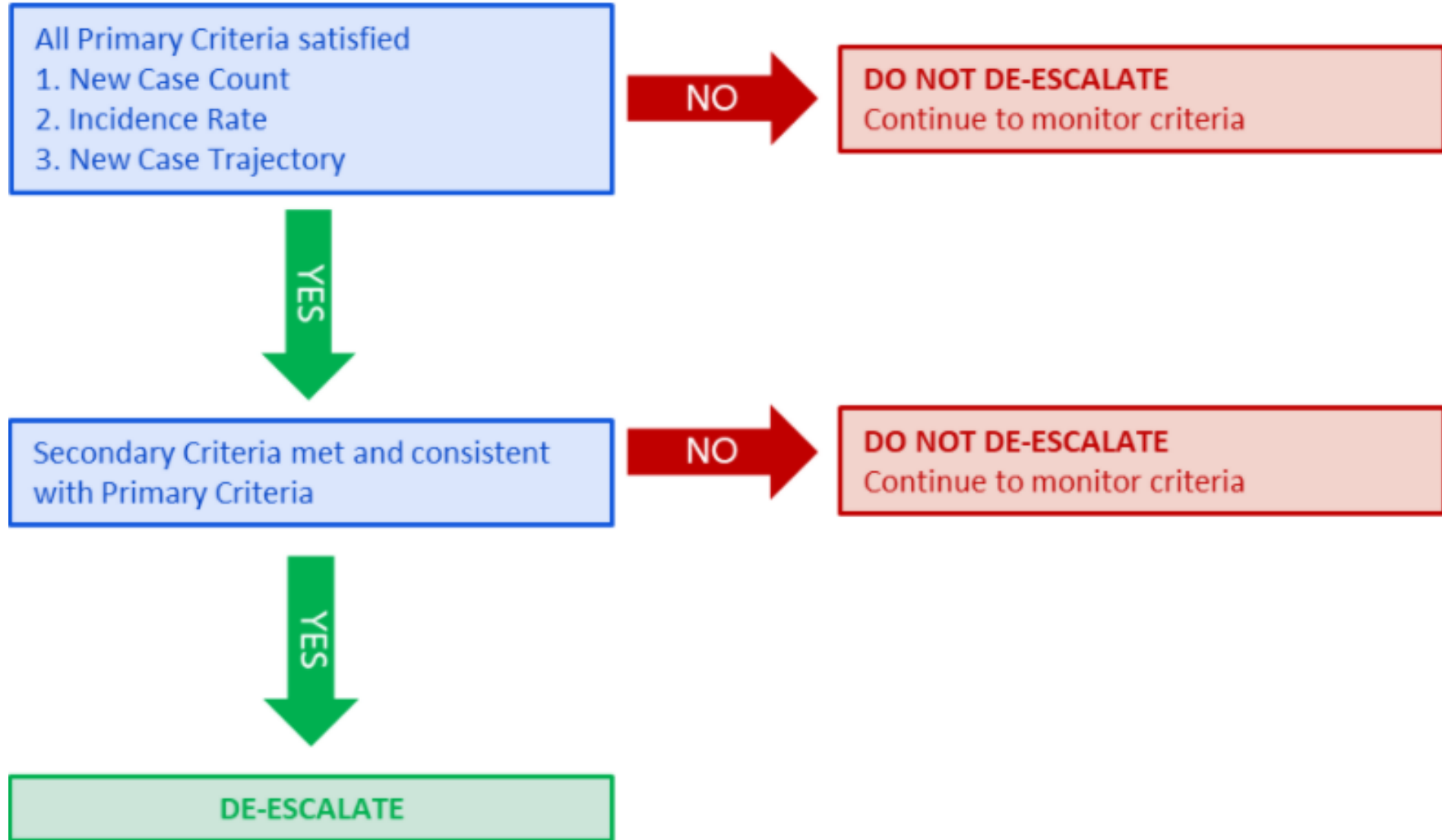
- Healthcare capacity



- Public health infrastructure



How a THN is de-escalated



Example: New Zealand has no THN

PRIMARY CRITERIA	New case count <50	15
	Incidence rate <0.75/100,000	0.31/100,000
	New case trajectory decelerating or stable	Decelerating

28-day Indicators (Consistency with 1° Criteria)		1 = Fully Consistent	2 = Partially Consistent	3 = Inconsistent
HEALTHCARE CAPACITY	Hospitalizations	Continuous decline		
	Hospital beds	Beds available		
	Ventilators	Ventilators available		
	ICU beds	ICU beds available		
	Elective surgery or procedures	Allowed to resume		
PUBLIC HEALTH INFRASTRUCTURE	Testing positivity rate	<3%		
	Contact tracing of cases	>75%		
	Documented exportations	0		



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Considerations for Institutions of Higher Education for Student International Travel or Study Abroad Programs

- Consider postponing or canceling student international travel programs
- Students may face unpredictable circumstances, such as travel restrictions, challenges returning home, and challenges accessing health care while abroad
- If the choice is made to continue student international travel programs evaluate the risks in the host country by checking:
 - CDC’s COVID-19 Travel Health Notices by destination
 - US State Department for travel restrictions for U.S. citizens
 - Requirements for U.S. citizens upon entry
 - COVID-19-specific mandates (e.g., testing, quarantine)



Some questions before considering student travel

- **Is COVID-19 spreading at the destination?**

A level 3 THN means avoid all non-essential travel

The more cases at your destination, the more risk of infection

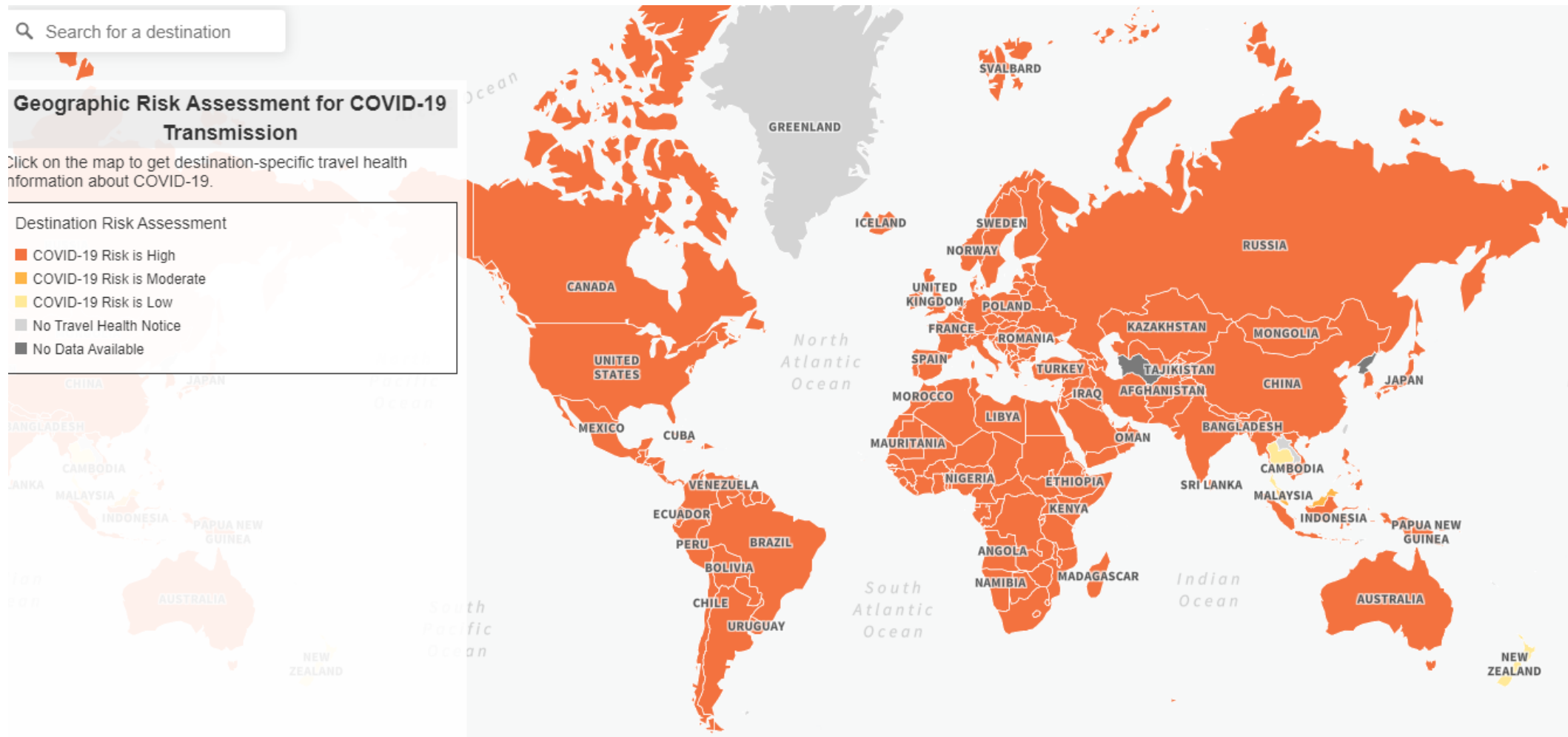


- **Is the student someone who might be at increased risk for getting severe disease from COVID-19?**

Anyone can get very ill, but people of any age with certain underlying medical conditions like diabetes are at increased risk

- **Does the destination have requirements or restrictions for travelers?** Check with the Office of Foreign affairs, Ministry of Health, or US Dept of State about entry requirements such as COVID-19 testing or restrictions such as quarantine
 - If the traveler tests positive on arrival, they may be required to isolate. They may be prevented from returning to the United States, as scheduled

Is COVID-19 spreading at your destination?



<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/map-and-travel-notice.html>

Example: Indonesia



Warning – Level 3, COVID-19 risk in Indonesia is high

- Indonesia reported 2081 new cases of COVID-19 on 2020-08-17. In total, 139,549 cases have been reported there
- **CDC recommends that travelers avoid all nonessential travel to Indonesia**
- Travelers at increased risk for severe illness from COVID-19 should consider postponing all travel, including essential travel, to Indonesia.
- COVID-19 risk in Indonesia is high
- If you get sick in Indonesia and need medical care, healthcare resources may be overwhelmed

Is the traveler someone who might be at increased risk of getting severe illness from COVID-19?

- Age
- Immune status
- Medical history (e.g., diabetes, asthma, lupus on certain medications, dialysis, cancer chemotherapy)
- Smoking
- Obesity

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/need-extra-precautions/index.html>



In addition to wearing a mask and social distancing there are additional ways to reduce risk at the destination

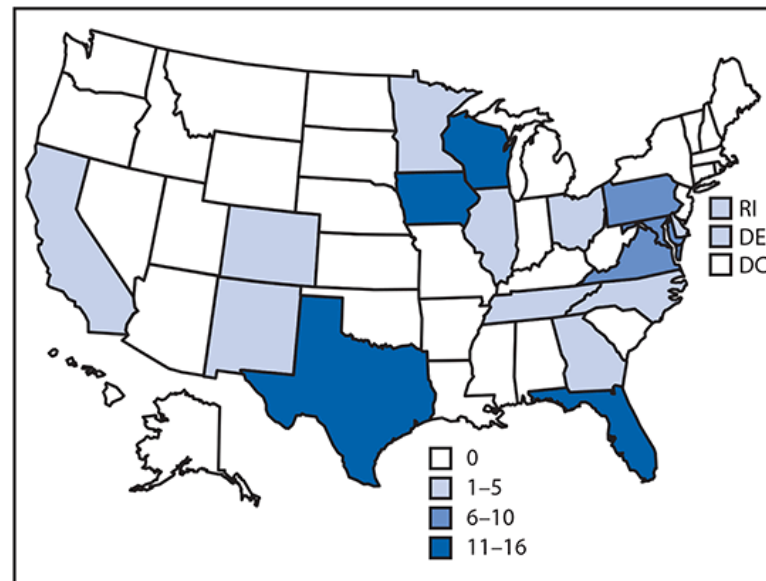
- Mode of travel
 - Avoid crowds on public transportation
- Special activities
 - Avoid cruises, mass gatherings
- Living conditions
 - Avoid crowded living conditions (e.g. dormitories with shared rooms and bathrooms)
- Purpose of program may increase risk
 - Programs in healthcare settings might be riskier

Activities in the host country such as Nile river cruises pose an added risk for rapid spread of disease even beyond the voyage

- 101 persons on nine separate Nile River cruises during February 11–March 5 returned to 18 states and had positive SARS-CoV-2 tests, nearly doubling the total number of known COVID-19 cases in the United States at that time



Photo from France24.com



It is not just the student traveler who is at risk

After travel it is important to continue to protect others

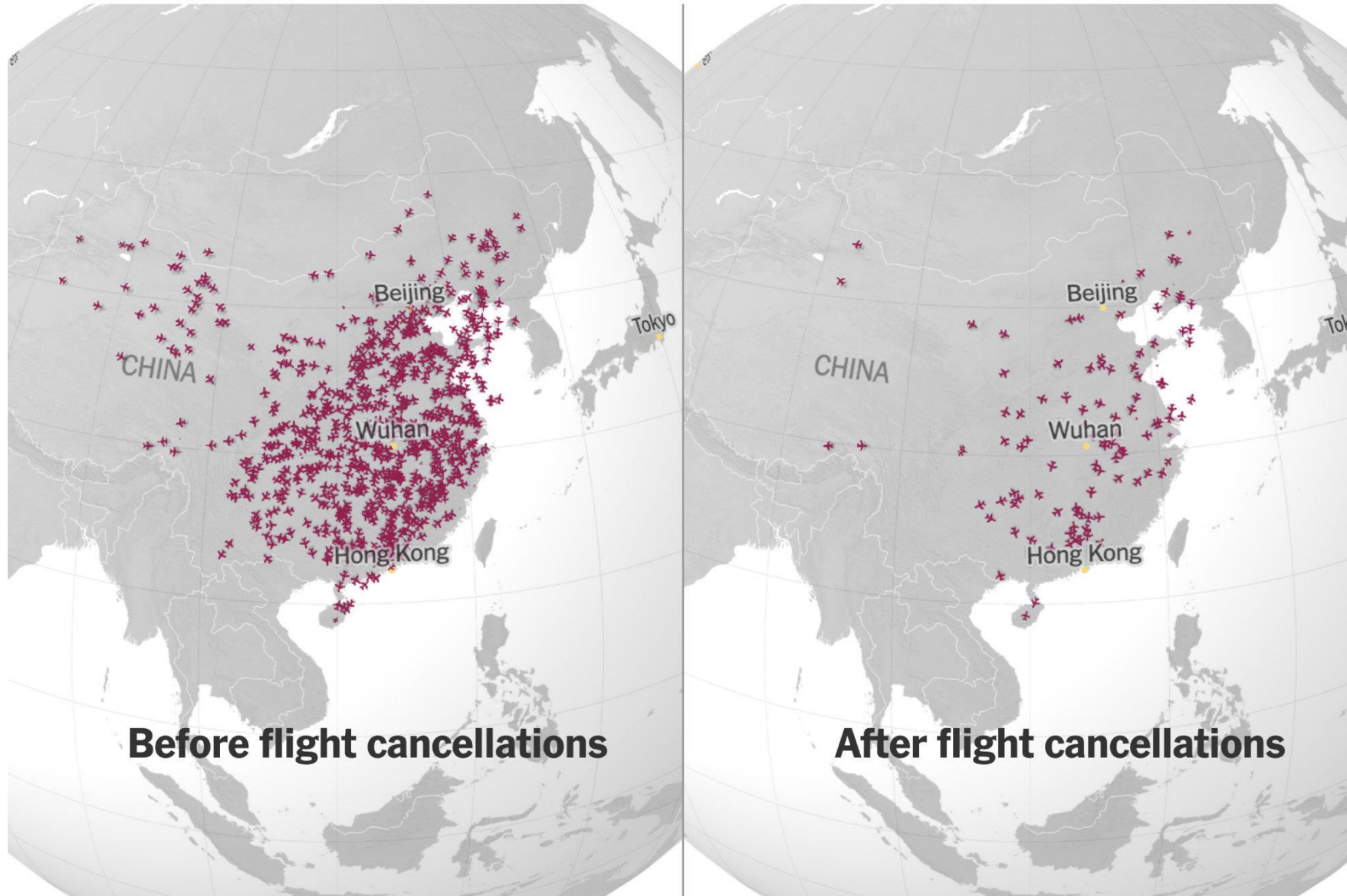
- **Watch your distance** -Stay at least 6 feet from anyone both indoors and outdoors
- **Wear a mask** to keep your nose and mouth covered when you are outside of your home
- **Wash your hands** often or use hand sanitizer
- **Watch your health:** Look for symptoms of COVID-19

Pre-COVID-19 global travel was on the rise



In 2019, there were 241 million International passengers, up 2.4% from 2018

What will global travel look like during the COVID-19 era ?



What will International travel look like in 2021 and beyond?



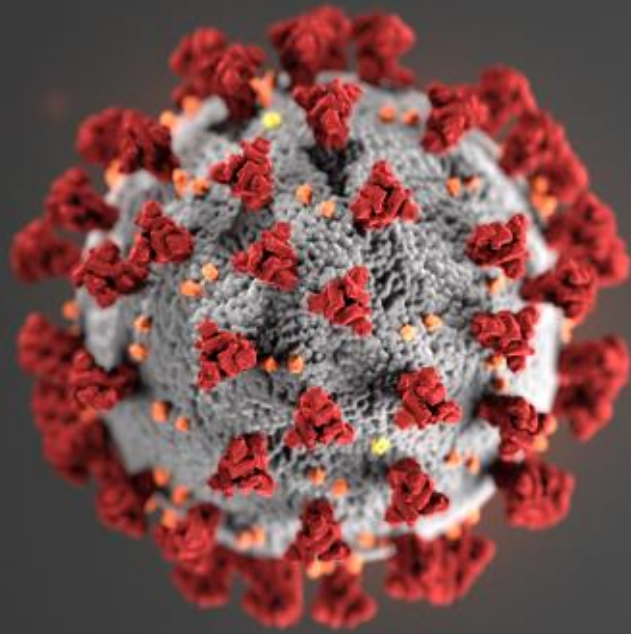
- Health attestations?
- Point of travel testing?
- Immunity passports?
- Vaccination?
- On-patient storage of vaccination history?

<https://www.bbc.com/future/article/20200709-how-covid-19-will-change-air-travel-as-we-know-it>(Credit: Getty Images)

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For more information, contact CDC
1-800-CDC-INFO (232-4636)
TTY: 1-888-232-6348 www.cdc.gov

Thank you

The findings and conclusions in this report are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official position of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.





*Please respond using the poll feature on your screen
The poll is anonymous.*

Lessons Learned, Monitoring Strategies, and Planning



Lessons learned

- ▶ A good starting point...
 - ▶ Travel registry - Response plan - Travel committee - Assistance provider - Policy
- ▶ With gaps...
 - ▶ Totally new crisis with totally new players
 - ▶ Wide-spread incident response plan
 - ▶ Faculty travel
 - ▶ Variety in partner response
 - ▶ Transparency

Strategies for monitoring the virus

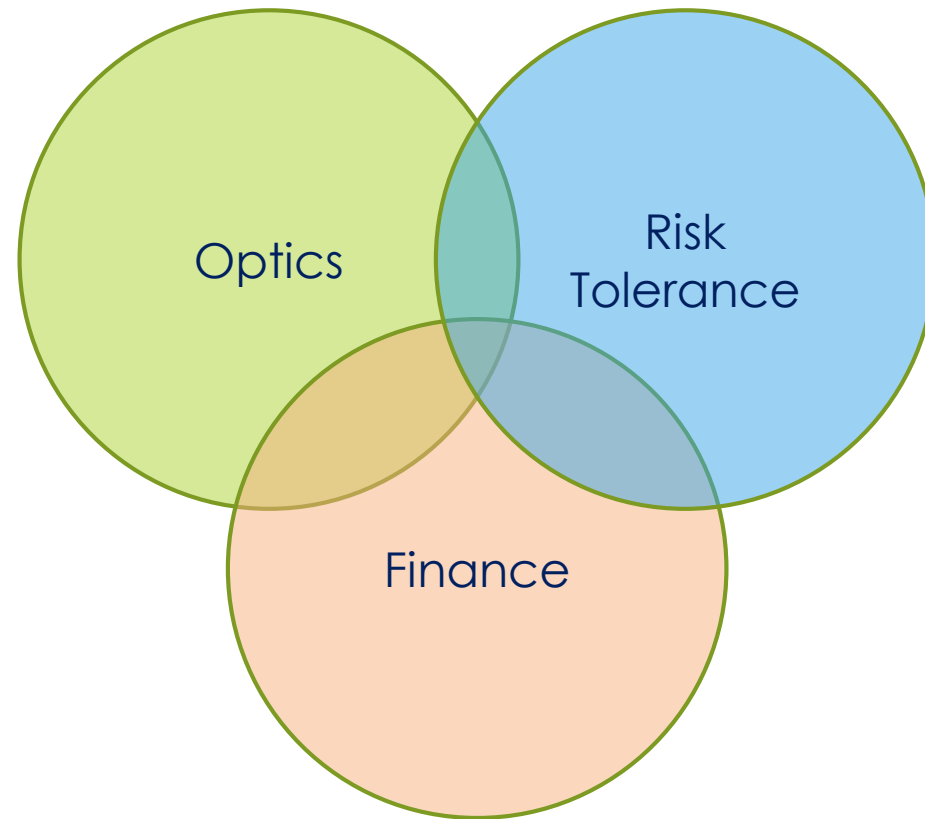
- ▶ DoS, CDC, Other country's travel advice
 - ▶ <https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice>
 - ▶ <https://travel.gc.ca/>
 - ▶ <https://www.smarttraveller.gov.au/>
- ▶ Daily briefings
- ▶ Peers
- ▶ OSAC
 - ▶ <https://www.osac.gov/>
- ▶ Insurance providers
- ▶ Watch for trends – airlines, quarantines, entrance bans

Free resources

- ▶ Open source

- ▶ Fragomen (immigration): <https://www.fragomen.com/about/news/immigration-update-coronavirus>
- ▶ Our World in Data (cases, death, testing): <https://ourworldindata.org/coronavirus-data>
- ▶ IATA Travel Centre (Flight restrictions): <https://www.iatatravelcentre.com/world.php>
- ▶ International SOS (Data) : <https://pandemic.internationalsos.com/2019-ncov/>

Planning



Criteria to consider

▶ Travel Considerations

- ▶ Assistance provider advice
- ▶ CDC
- ▶ Dept. of State
- ▶ Entrance restrictions
- ▶ Essential?
- ▶ Flight options
- ▶ Planned Itinerary
- ▶ Quarantine
- ▶ Your own restrictions

▶ COVID-19 Considerations

- ▶ Case/death/hospitalizations
- ▶ COVID-19 negative
- ▶ Healthcare infrastructure
- ▶ Testing

▶ Traveler Considerations

- ▶ Risk awareness/mitigation measures
- ▶ Familiarity with destination
- ▶ Completed pre-departure courses?
- ▶ Acceptance of responsibility/Waiver

<https://global.cornell.edu/travel/international-travel-guidelines-policy-and-recommendations>

Q&A with Panelists



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Allison Cash Spiro

Associate Director,
NAFSA

Reminders

- Today's Government Connection was recorded and will be available to watch on demand.
- Download the handout from today's presentation in the "files" section.
- Continue today's conversation in the Education Abroad Knowledge Community Network – visit www.nafsa.org/eakcnetwork

SAVE THE DATE



- October 8 – NAFSA Virtual Workshop Student Health and Safety Abroad
- October 15 – NAFSA Virtual Workshop Risk Assessment and Crisis Management in Education Abroad www.nafsa.org/workshops



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