

## Travelers' Diarrhea

### Overview:

Travelers' diarrhea (TD) is one of the most common illnesses afflicting the modern traveler; most studies indicate the rates of contraction of TD ranges from 20% to 60%.<sup>1</sup> By definition, TD refers to a watery diarrhea that varies in severity, from tolerable up to incapacitating, and develops in individuals during or within 10 days of returning from travel to underdeveloped regions.<sup>1</sup> TD is broken into three different classifications by the International Society of Travel Medicine (ISTM) based on the tolerability of the diarrhea and how largely its effects disrupt the traveler's plans.<sup>1</sup> Most cases of TD are self-limiting but with the increase of international travel and antibiotic resistance a need for an evidence-based clinical practice guideline for patients with TD is essential.<sup>1</sup>

### Key Take Home Points:

- Most often acute diarrhea is infectious and is self-limited<sup>1</sup>
  - **Viral infections** are most common
    - Rotavirus,
    - Adenovirus
    - Norovirus
- TD is one of the most common illnesses afflicting the modern traveler; most studies indicate the rates of contraction of TD ranges from 20% to 60%.
- TD is **most commonly** caused by these pathogens:<sup>1</sup>
  - *Giardia duodenalis* (most common protozoa in TD)
  - *Salmonella*
  - *Campylobacter jejuni*
  - Enteroaggregative *E. coli* (EAEC)
  - *Shigella* species
- There is some variability among geographic areas as to which pathogen is the most common cause of TD.<sup>1</sup>
  - Southeast Asia: *Campylobacter* species is the most common cause of TD.
  - Nepal, Peru, Haiti, and Guatemala: Cyclospora is the most common organism.
- The overall management of TD is based on symptom severity.
  - **Most patients have mild TD** symptoms, so supportive measures such as oral rehydration therapy and dietary modifications are recommended.<sup>2</sup>

## References:

1. 1. Pérez-Arellano JL, Górgolas-Hernández-Mora M, Salvador F, et al. Executive summary of imported infectious diseases after returning from foreign travel: Consensus document of the Spanish Society for Infectious Diseases and Clinical Microbiology (SEIMC). *Enferm Infecc Microbiol Clin*. 2018;36(3):187-193. doi:10.1016/j.eimc.2017.02.009
2. Connor BA. Persistent diarrhea in returned travelers. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Yellow Book, Chapter 11. Posttravel evaluation. <https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/yellowbook/2020/posttravel-evaluation/persistent-diarrhea-in-returned-travelers>