

Public health advice for travellers attending **UEFA EURO 2024**

The UEFA EURO 2024 final tournament will take place in Germany from 14 June to 14 July 2024. If you are travelling to attend, we encourage you to follow this health advice to protect your health and well-being.

Before attending the event

Vaccination

Check your vaccination status and consult your doctor on whether you need to get or renew any vaccinations. Depending on factors such as your age, the place you live, any underlying health conditions and previous vaccination status, these may include vaccinations against measles, pertussis, tetanus, diphtheria, polio, coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) or other diseases.

More information on recommended vaccines in Germany: [here](#).



Vaccinations against COVID-19

[The emergency phase of COVID-19 is over](#), but the virus continues to spread and endanger people's lives, particularly those who are older, have chronic diseases, are immunocompromised or pregnant. Vaccination lowers the risk of severe illness and death. If you are at risk of severe COVID-19, check your COVID-19 vaccination status and consult with your health-care provider for any needed doses.

More information on COVID-19 vaccination in Germany: [here](#).
WHO information and recommendations on COVID-19 vaccination: [here](#).

Sun exposure and heat

High temperatures can be expected this summer in Germany, which can pose serious health risks. Extended sun and heat exposure can lead to an increase in severe heat- and ultraviolet (UV) radiation-related illnesses and, in extreme cases, may prove fatal.

To protect yourself from the sun and heat keep the following in mind:



- **Keep out of the heat where possible.** Stay in the shade and avoid strenuous activity during the hottest time of day. Do not leave children or animals in parked vehicles, and if necessary and possible, spend 2–3 hours of the day in a cool place.
- **Keep your body cool and use sunscreen.** Use light and loose-fitting clothing. Always apply sunscreen with SPF 30 or higher, even if you plan to stay in the shade. Wear long, airy, light-coloured clothing and a hat for additional protection. Don't forget sunglasses to shield your eyes.
- **Stay hydrated.** Remember to drink enough. Heavy sweating causes our bodies to lose a lot of water. Therefore, you should drink around two to three litres of fluid throughout the day during a heatwave. Water and chilled teas without added sugar are best. Avoid alcohol and limit caffeine and sugar, as these can dehydrate you and strain your circulation.
- **Eat lightly.** On hot days, it is better to avoid large meals. Opt for several small meals throughout the day and choose foods that are fresh and cool, like fruits, vegetables, salads, low-fat soups and dairy products.
- **Check your medication.** If you take medication, consult your doctor before travelling to verify its heat tolerance. Follow storage instructions carefully, especially in hot conditions.

Take these precautions seriously to avoid heat-related health issues. While taking care of yourself, remember to check on your family and friends who are with you.

Further information on how to recognize and treat heat-related complaints please consult the website of the German Federal Centre for Health Education: [here](#).

The German Weather Service issues heat warnings for days with high heat loads: [here](#).

For information on UV radiation and UV protection consult the website of German Federal Office for Radiation Protection: [here](#).

WHO health advice for hot weather: [here](#).

Water and food safety

Tap water in Germany is safe to drink.

During summer, hot and humid weather improves the conditions for germs to multiply quickly and make food unsafe. Contaminated foods may not appear, taste or smell different from safe ones. Some foodborne illnesses are mild and resolve within days, but others can be severe or even fatal.



To prevent illness transmitted through food:

- eat food that is thoroughly cooked, and wash fruit and vegetables;
- avoid consuming cooked or perishable food that has been kept at room temperature for more than 2 hours; and
- wash your hands frequently with soap and water or use alcohol-based hand sanitizer, especially before touching food and after going to the toilet.

WHO's "Five keys to safer food": [here](#).

Tick-borne diseases

While you're outdoors, remember that ticks are most active from April to September. Ticks aren't just in forests; they can also be in city parks, gardens and backyards – anywhere you might be enjoying the football matches or surrounding festivities. Ticks can transmit diseases that may result in severe chronic conditions or even death, such as borreliosis (Lyme disease), or tick-borne encephalitis (TBE).



To reduce the risk of being bitten by ticks:

- avoid walking in wooded and bushy areas, including off-trails;
- If you are in a bushy area or have been staying in a park:
 - wear clothes that cover most body parts such as long sleeves and long trousers;
 - tuck trouser legs into socks so that ticks cannot crawl up inside;
 - wear light-coloured clothes to help you find ticks easily on clothes;
 - use approved insect repellents on the skin and/or clothes following instructions – insect repellent should be applied on a child by an adult; and
- Regularly check clothes and skin for ticks, especially after outdoor activities.

TBE vaccination is recommended in Germany for travellers in areas with a special TBE risk, who are likely to have any contact with ticks. An overview of the current TBE high-risk areas in Germany is available from the Robert Koch Institute website: [here](#).

Respiratory viruses



Know your risk and protect yourself and others from COVID-19 and other respiratory viruses.

While anyone can catch COVID-19, certain groups are at higher risk of developing severe disease. This includes older people, pregnant women, immunocompromised people and those living with chronic conditions.

Measures to protect yourself and others include practising good hand and cough hygiene, ensuring adequate indoor ventilation and staying at home if sick, as well as staying up to date with vaccination in line with your country's recommendations.

Mask-wearing and physical distancing are recommended during periods of high virus circulation for certain settings and at-risk groups. More information: [here](#).

Infections transmitted through sex

It's important to protect yourself from infections transmitted while having sex. Common sexually transmitted infections (STIs) in Europe include chlamydia, gonorrhoea and syphilis. Other infections like HIV, viral hepatitis and mpox can also be transmitted during sex. Untreated STIs and mpox can lead to serious health issues, while HIV requires lifelong treatment.

Condoms, when used correctly and consistently, are effective at decreasing the risk of STIs and HIV. In Germany, condoms are available in drugstores, pharmacies and supermarkets. Wearing a condom won't fully protect you from mpox, but it may reduce your risk or extent of exposure.



Consult your health-care provider in your home country for necessary vaccinations or precautions, such as Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP) for HIV. Note that PrEP does not protect against other STIs. There are effective vaccines for hepatitis A, hepatitis B and mpox.

If you have had unprotected sex or frequent sex with multiple partners, screening for STIs is recommended. For potential HIV or mpox exposure, contact outpatient departments or HIV and STI specialist practices for post-exposure prophylaxis. More information: [here](#).

STIs and mpox may have no symptoms, but common signs include unusual discharge from genitals or the rectum, itching, pain during urination, rectal pain, skin changes including rashes, blister-like lesions, yellowing of the skin, pain during sex or influenza-like symptoms. If you notice any signs of an

STI or mpox, see a health-care provider, sexual health clinic or community organization promptly. Early detection makes treatment easier and prevents transmission to others.

How to access STI and mpox testing and treatment in Germany, if needed

If you suspect that you have become infected or if you notice signs of an STI or mpox you should seek medical advice and, if necessary, get tested. In many major German cities it is also possible to get anonymous advice and, if necessary, be tested for STIs, mpox and HIV in many *Gesundheitsamt* [local health authorities] and at *Aidshilfe* [local AIDS organizations] for example. You can find out whether such an offer is available: [here](#).

Use of alcohol, tobacco and cannabis

Alcohol

In Germany, acquisition, possession and consumption of alcohol are permitted.

- If you are an adult (from the age of 18), you are allowed to purchase any type of alcohol in any quantity.
- If you are 16 years and above, you can purchase beer and wine, though not spirits.

While alcohol can generally be consumed in public, there are specific places, such as local public transport, where consumption is prohibited.



If you choose to consume alcohol, do it responsibly and limit your intake. While small quantities of alcohol can have a stimulating effect, overall it slows down brain activity. At higher doses, it can lead to disturbances in perception and attention. Judgment, coordination and speech may become increasingly impaired.

Driving after consuming alcohol is strongly discouraged. In Germany, if you are found driving with a blood alcohol concentration (BAC) of just 0.3 per mille, you can face punishment.

You can reach 0.3 per mille BAC if you drink the following amounts:

- approximately 0.1 litres of wine or 0.3 litres of beer for a 60 kg woman
- approximately 0.2 litres of wine or 0.5 litres of beer for an 80 kg man.

In hot weather, such as in Germany during the summer, consuming alcohol can lead to increased circulation problems,

loss of consciousness and even a life-threatening drop in blood pressure.

For your health and safety, less alcohol is better, none is best.

Tobacco

In Germany, acquisition, possession and consumption of tobacco products/e-cigarettes are permitted from the age of 18. Passing on these products to persons under 18 years of age is not permitted.



Smoking, including e-cigarettes use, is banned in most indoor public spaces such as local public transport, airports and restaurants, except in designated smoking areas at train stations, airports and some restaurants depending on the federal state.

Tobacco use and exposure to tobacco smoke pose serious health risks, including respiratory diseases and increased cancer risk. Quitting smoking is the single best way to protect your health and the health of those around you.

Cannabis

As of 1 April 2024, adults in Germany aged 18 and over can legally consume cannabis, with a limit of up to 25 grams for personal possession in public. From 1 July 2024, in non-commercial “cannabis social clubs”, members can cultivate and share their own cannabis for personal use. However, these clubs are for locals only; tourists are not permitted to attend. Outside of these arrangements, buying, selling or sharing cannabis remains prohibited.

In addition, it is prohibited to:

- consume cannabis in the presence of or near facilities for children and young people, including playgrounds, schools and sports facilities;
- consume cannabis in pedestrian zones between 7 am and 8 pm;
- pass cannabis to minors, which is punishable by law;
- import cannabis from abroad; and
- drive a vehicle under the influence of cannabis, as it severely impairs motor skills and increases accident risks.



Cannabis effects vary widely, including hallucinations, memory impairment and increased risk-taking. Adverse reactions such as panic attacks and rapid heartbeat can occur. Long-term use may lead to learning deficits and memory issues, especially in young people under 25, as the brain is particularly vulnerable to tetrahydrocannabinol-related damage.

Access to the health system in Germany



If you are a citizen or resident of the European Union (EU) or the European Economic Area (EEA) country and temporarily staying in Germany, you remain covered by health insurance in your home country. To access medical treatment, you will need your European Health Insurance Card (EHIC) and proof of identity (identity card or passport). The EHIC is issued by your health insurance organisation in your country of origin if you have statutory health insurance there. Private insurance holders do not receive an EHIC.

If you do not have an EHIC, you can request a temporary replacement certificate from your health insurance company. If you have statutory health insurance in another European Union country, you are entitled to medical treatment, hospital treatment and medication in Germany in case of acute illness. You must present your EHIC or the provisional replacement certificate to the doctor or hospital as proof.

In case of an emergency, you will receive treatment even without a health card.

What should I do if I become ill?

Anyone who is ill can go to a family doctor's office. If necessary, you will be referred to a selected specialist practice or hospital. Search available services: [here](#).



If the doctor's offices are closed, the on-call medical service can be contacted by calling **116117** (in German). You can find out which doctor's office is on call in the late afternoon, at night or at the weekend: [here](#) (available in 10 languages).

If you have acute dental problems, you can contact the emergency dental service: [here](#).

In the event of life-threatening and serious illnesses or injuries, you can call the emergency services at **112** or go to the emergency room of a hospital.

What do I do in an emergency?

Diverse phone numbers are available to assist with emergency situations as follows:

- **112** for immediate medical assistance (free of charge):
 - in case of medical emergencies, such as unconsciousness, shortness of breath, severe pain, heavy bleeding, poisoning, paralysis, serious injuries, high fever or psychological crises;
 - if you are with someone who requires urgent medical help, and stay with the person until help arrives; and
 - in case of immediate danger (you can also call the police at 110).
- **0800 1110111** in an acute mental health crisis (free of charge, in German). You can also visit a doctor's office or hospital. For international helplines, see [here](#).



How and where do I get medication?

Medication is usually available from pharmacies. Some emergency service pharmacies are also open at night and on the weekends. [Here](#) you can find out which pharmacy is open in the late afternoon, at night, or at the weekend.



For many medications, you need a prescription from a doctor. Anyone who has to take medication regularly – for example, for high blood pressure or diabetes – needs a doctor’s prescription, which can be obtained from a family doctor.

If you are travelling to Germany for UEFA EURO 2024, do not forget to bring medications you are taking for your chronic diseases with you.

Information on useful websites and phone numbers

On-call medical service 116117: If the doctor’s offices are closed, the on-call medical service can be contacted by calling 116117.

Medical emergency 112: In the event of a medical emergency the emergency services can be reached by calling 112 (free of charge). It is advisable to use German or English for communication. The ability to understand other European languages depends upon the staff present.

Danger 112 or 110: If there is an imminent danger, the emergency services should be called at 112 or alternatively the police at 110.

Acute mental crises 0800 1110111: In acute mental crises you can contact a doctor’s office or a hospital [here](#). Telephone help can be obtained from the telephone helpline by calling 0800 1110111 (in German).



Dealing with false information

It is very important to get information, advice and guidance from official sources, such as national and local health authority or international organizations such as WHO.

An infodemic – too much information including false or misleading information – can intensify during mass gathering events, causing confusion and lead to behaviours that can potentially harm health.

Always check the source of information and analyse the content before taking action and sharing it with others.

