



SAME PLACES, NEW ADVENTURE
ARGENTINA - CHILE

MEDICAL INFORMATION ARGENTINA & CHILE

The safety and security of the participants is a major concern of the rally organisers. This is why, this year, there will be fifty three people in the medical team placed under the management of Doctor Florence Pommerie. This team will be available during the whole period of the trial, 24 hours a day, with three main roles:

- to ensure the safety and the initial medical aid on the course thanks to its response capabilities: 10 medically equipped 4 Wheel drive vehicles, the presence of a doctor in each of 3 support trucks, 3 helicopters with a team of two doctors on board (re-animator, emergency, nurse-anaesthetist);
- to respond to all your medical problems in the medical bivouac located next to the PC Course (team under the responsibility of Doctor Campos)
- to quickly organise your health repatriation if necessary.

In spite of the scale of human and material means as its disposal, the medical team cannot remove all the dangers related to such a trial. However, if some cannot be foreseen, others may be anticipated and avoided. This is why it seems necessary for us to inform you of the existing medical risks in the countries crossed by the rally and the precautions to take in order to protect yourself.

A - Infectious Risks

MALARIA (very little risk over the course of the rally in Argentina and in Chile)

Caused by the parasite, plasmodium, it is transmitted by mosquito bites; it is a serious infection, sometimes fatal. The disease does not appear immediately and therefore can occur on your return from the rally.

Nevertheless, the risk of malaria, present exclusively in the benign form of *P. Vivax*, is low in the countries crossed and is limited to rural areas along the border with Bolivia (the plains of the provinces Salta and Jujuy) and with Paraguay (the plains of the Corrientes and Misiones provinces).

No vaccination is mandatory for international travellers in Argentina and Chile.

YELLOW FEVER

This is a viral infection transmitted by mosquito bites. Often serious (and even fatal) it can today be avoided, thanks to a vaccine. Effective for 10 years, this vaccine is only given in approved centres and must be done at least 10 days before leaving.

DENGUE FEVER

This is also transmitted by mosquitoes. No vaccine or treatment exists for this illness which is generally benign (flu symptoms) but can be serious in its hemorrhagic version. Protecting yourself against mosquito bites is the only possible prevention method. A few cases have been detected in Argentina.



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RABIES

It exists in some of the areas crossed by the Dakar. It is transmitted through infected animals licking wounds or biting; dogs are not the only vector. Some animals which do not normally bite may do so when they have the disease. A vaccine exists but does not appear justified because the risk remains nevertheless a minor one. Furthermore, it is always possible to be a vaccinated after being bitten.

CHOLERA

The risk is low outside of epidemics and if you respect basic hygiene rules (oral contamination). However, a vaccine has recently been developed.

HEPATITIS A

This disease has spread throughout the world, including in the most developed countries, the risk of contamination depends on the conditions of your stay. The disease is contracted orally. A vaccine exists. Some people, without knowing it, have already contracted Hepatitis A. A stock of antibodies can be built up in order to avoid vaccination, which while certainly not dangerous, is of little use. The treatment can only be symptomatic.

The TURISTA (E.COLI virus)

Most often caused by a virus, it is contracted orally. There is no preventive treatment, but it is important to protect oneself. The only way to do this is by perfectly respecting hygiene rules.

Food items most at risk are prepared meals when eaten later cold; seafood, meat, fish barely or badly cooked and raw vegetables as well as fruit not peeled by your own hand. Drinking water must be boiled, filtered and drunk from capped bottles.

SALMONELLA SHIGELLOSA

This disease is contracted orally. A vaccine exists against typhoid (which is a salmonella) but not against all bacteria. These diseases can be serious despite existing treatment which is nevertheless effective.

The So called DIRTY HAND DISEASES

CHOLERA, HEPATITIS A, TURISTA, SALMONELLA SHIGELLOSA all have oral infection in common, either by water or by contaminated food, or by putting the hands to the mouth after having touched a contaminated object. It is therefore important to:

- wash your hands,
- not to put your hands into your mouth,
- to peel fruit and vegetables and only eat food whose preparation has been checked,
- only drink products in sealed packaging which you open yourself without sharing it (oral contamination).

OTHER AFFLICTIONS (be careful of small rodents!)

More than 1 500 cases of the **Hantavirus** lung syndrome have been confirmed in South America between 1993 and 2004. This virus, carried by a small rodent and subject to airborne infection or by contact, is present in Patagonia, notably in the south of the San Carlos de Bariloche region. The infection which can be fatal in a very short time period, is marked by the sudden appearance of fevers accompanied by pains in the lumbar and/or stomach region, vomiting, headaches...



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The Argentine hemorrhagic fever is a serious disease provoked by the **Junin Virus**. The endemic area is found in the provinces of Buenos Aires, Santa Fe, Cordoba and La Pampa. Infection can also be airborne or by contact with a rodent found in that region. Muscular pains, headaches, loss of appetite, sickness, pain in the lumbar region are the main symptoms of this infection which can be fatal. It is important to not take aspirin but paracetamol.

Other bacterial, viral or parasitic infections exist in the countries crossed by the rally. The risk of being infected by one of them is low or non-existent. To protect yourself, we insist again on the importance of protecting oneself against insect bites (and not only mosquitoes), to always wear shoes, to not bathe in fresh water, and to avoid all contact with animals.

We merely wish to bring to your attention the high rate of **AIDS and sexually transmitted diseases** in the different countries crossed and that the **regulations which apply in your country are obviously equally valid**.

The A H1N1 flu strain is no longer expected to be very virulent in South America in the month of January (summer) having already reached its local peak.

Nevertheless, existing hygiene measures (washing your hands frequently, using disposable tissues, ...) and the health regulations advocated of course remain valid and are recommended during the rally, particularly at the bivouacs. The medical team will treat mild cases as "traditional" flu (prescribing paracetamol, ...); any complications will be treated appropriately, including hospitalisation if necessary.

B - Risks due to the climate and the geography

DEHYDRATION

This is a very major risk on this trial, which will take place in height of the summer with temperatures reaching around 35°/40°. Dehydration occurs insidiously (headaches, lack of thirst, even a dislike of water). It considerably increases fatigue and can be responsible for disagreeable incidents such as renal colic but also very serious situations above all under prolonged effort. We lose water through the skin but also salts, in particular NaCl or kitchen salt). It is therefore necessary to:

- check your water reserves and fill them up at every possible occasion,
- to drink water, but also to eat the rations which are provided for you in the morning or to drink the product specially prepared.

A good way of checking: urination must be frequent and the colour, remain clear. If despite the drinks you do not urinate, you must increase the liquid rations.

ALTIITUDE SICKNESS

This rally will cross the Andes cordillera at more than 4500m; any effort, even minimal can be risky at this altitude.

In the event of serious headaches, nausea or shortness of breath, you should immediately stop any effort and ask for medical help. This will consist of giving you oxygen and getting you to descend rapidly into the valley. In serious cases, the medical team has a hyperbaric chamber.

WOUNDS AND BURNS

They must be disinfected and covered by a dressing, while waiting for the appropriate care. Hence the reason to own a minimal first aid kit:

- a disinfectant



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- a few gauzes
- a bandage
- plasters
- and a few anti diarrhea tablets...

Finally, the level of pollution and the pollen from certain plants in Santiago means that anyone sensitive may be liable to « asthmatic » allergies. To be monitored.

The purpose of this information is obviously not to alarm you, but it is provided so that you may protect yourself effectively and therefore have a wonderful time on the Dakar.

Good rallying everyone!

Doctor Florence POMMERIE
Medical Director