

HEALTH CHECKS ON ARRIVAL IN AUSTRALIA – Sango Script FINAL (2019)

This video can be viewed in Sango language online here: <https://youtu.be/btf8F95T5sM>

If you have just arrived here you may be keen to start learning English, put your children into school and get a job. If you take care of your physical and emotional wellbeing first, all of these things will be easier to do.

Soon after you arrive in Australia, your caseworker will make appointments for you to see a Doctor. In Australia we call a family Doctor a “GP”. Even if you are not sick, it is important for you and your children to attend your first GP appointments. This will also include planning for compulsory vaccinations. Checking your health is important for settling in Australia.

You will meet the Refugee Health Nurse who will support you through the GP health visits and any ongoing care. The Refugee Nurses coordinate appointments for you and your family and can help by explaining any health matters or services that you want to ask about. The Nurse can also accompany you to a Doctor or Specialist appointment if you request this until you gain confidence with our health system. The Nurse is good at explaining things so you can understand and participate in your own health care

Many people coming to Australia have had poor access to health care overseas. Health problems may be due to poor diet, living conditions and unclean water.

People may also have emotional health issues from war, loss of family and friends, and human rights abuses. Some people have had medical checks before arrival, and may have been tested for HIV, tuberculosis and other conditions like malaria. Some people may also have had some vaccinations. Your Doctor will have a copy of your health record when you first visit.

Pre-travel health checks are often done many months before travelling, and it is possible to develop a health problem after getting the results.

For this reason, some tests may be repeated after you arrive in Australia. This is because the Doctors and Nurses want to provide you with the very best health care and work towards keeping you in good health.

Why do you need to have health checks after you arrive in Australia?

It is an important step in improving and maintaining your health on arrival in Australia, as the Doctor may detect very early some potential health problems you were not aware of.

If any sign of illness is found, you will be offered appropriate tests and treatment if needed, or some treatments will help prevent illness from developing, and keep you and your family in good health. The refugee health Nurse can organise referrals to specialist clinics for further advice, or to services such as women’s health, dental and eye health, and counselling and Child Health Services

What does the health check involve?

The health check is for each person who arrives in Australia, including children. It may **take up to one hour or more**, and may include the following:

- Questions about your health,
- a physical check - up,
- Collecting blood,
- urine and faeces specimens and

*This script is the English version of a Sango video that can be found online here: <https://youtu.be/btf8F95T5sM>
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- Vaccinations and
- Answering any questions or concerns that you may have.

The Doctor or Nurse may ask if you have any problems that might be related to experiences prior to your arrival. There are specialised services that can help you cope with these issues.

You will need more than one visit to the clinic or doctor's office. At the second visit, the Doctor will discuss your test results, plan any management, and begin the vaccinations. You may be more comfortable at this visit to ask any questions or raise any personal concerns that you may have.

Ask your Doctor or nurse to record your vaccinations in your yellow book or a card that you can keep with you.

Why is Vaccination so important

When people are immunised it protects you and your family from some diseases and benefits the whole community.

To enrol in school your child needs to be fully vaccinated. The school can refuse entry if your child is not immunised. If your child is completing their vaccinations they may need a letter of proof from their GP to state this.

You must ensure your child completes the course of vaccinations. To receive Centrelink payments, your child needs to be fully immunised.

What should you bring with you?

Medicare card, or number, if available
 Vaccination records and information about your medical history.
 Health Care Card

What happens after the health check?

The Doctor or Nurse may ask you to come back. This is so treatment and follow-up can be arranged if needed. Always ask for a copy of the next appointment and keep this so you do not forget the appointment.

What does 'Confidentiality' mean?

Confidentiality means that all your medical history and test results cannot be given to people who are not involved in your health care without your permission.

Health workers, Doctors and Nurses are not allowed to discuss your health or medical problems with anyone, apart from other health care workers involved in your care and without your permission.

You will be asked to sign consent for this information sharing when you attend the GP Clinic.

Health checks are free and do not affect your residency status in Australia.

If English is not your first language, an interpreter can help you to speak with health care workers and get the best health care. Please ask the health worker to book an interpreter, or to call the **Telephone Interpreter Service (TIS)** on **131 450**. The Interpreter service is free for your GP to use.