

## **Lassa Fever Beyond Borders: Implications for Travel Medicine from Nigeria – A Narrative Review**

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**Background:** Lassa fever is an acute viral haemorrhagic illness endemic to West Africa, with Nigeria bearing a significant proportion of the global burden. Increasing international travel, labour mobility, and global interconnectedness have expanded its relevance beyond endemic borders, posing challenges for travel medicine and global health security.

**Objective:** This narrative review examines Lassa fever from a travel medicine perspective, focusing on epidemiology in Nigeria, transmission pathways relevant to travellers, clinical features and diagnostic challenges, implications for international travel, and strategies for prevention and control.

**Methods:** A narrative review of peer-reviewed literature, surveillance reports, and guidance from international health agencies was conducted, with emphasis on travel-associated risk, exported cases, and implications for travel health practice.

**Results:** Although the overall risk to international travellers remains low, travel-associated Lassa fever cases have been documented in non-endemic countries, often with delayed diagnosis due to non-specific early symptoms and limited clinician familiarity. Transmission risks are highest among healthcare workers, humanitarian responders, business travellers, and individuals visiting friends and relatives in endemic settings. The absence of a licensed vaccine underscores the importance of pre-travel risk assessment, targeted health education, and post-travel surveillance.

**Conclusion:** Lassa fever represents an emerging concern for travel medicine in an era of global mobility. Strengthened awareness, improved surveillance, and coordinated stakeholder engagement are essential to mitigate cross-border transmission and enhance global health preparedness.

**Keywords:** Lassa fever; Travel medicine; Nigeria; Viral haemorrhagic fever; International travel; Global health security; Imported infections