



**Royal College
of Physicians**

Diploma in Tropical Medicine & Hygiene

Syllabus

The following outlines the range of topics that may be covered in the DTM&H examination and are felt to be important for a doctor with good knowledge of tropical medicine. Questions will not necessarily be restricted to the topics below, which are listed as examples of important topics. The levels of knowledge and skill required are those expected from someone who has had approximately 250 hours of teaching time on a good quality tropical medicine course or has achieved the same level through a mixture of teaching and directed learning.

Emphasis is placed on the candidate's ability to form an understanding of the prevention, epidemiology, diagnosis, manifestations, clinical course and management of disease in the tropics, with knowledge of wider public health issues including disease control measures. Although microscopy technique is not examined directly, it is expected that each candidate will have achieved a level of proficiency through teaching on the approved courses.

Infectious diseases (approximately 60% of the examination)

Infection in the tropics and the returned traveller forms a substantial part of the examination. It is expected that the prevention, epidemiology (including any vectors and other forms of transmission), manifestations, clinical course, diagnosis, and management of the following infections/infection syndromes should be known:

- > **Viral infections:** HIV/AIDS, Dengue fever and other arboviruses, Lassa/Ebola and other causes of viral haemorrhagic fever, Rabies, viral gastrointestinal infections, SARS, MERS-CoV, Japanese encephalitis and other viral encephalitides, Polio, Measles, Hepatitis viruses, emergent viruses of clinical importance (e.g., Zika, Nipah, COVID-19, Monkeypox), other viruses
- > **Bacterial infections:** Anthrax, Brucellosis, Leptospirosis, Leprosy, Melioidosis, Plague, Relapsing fever, Tetanus, Tuberculosis, Typhoid, Typhus/Rickettsial infections, other bacterial infection
- > **Protozoal infections:** Gut protozoa, Leishmania, Malaria, Trypanosomiasis, Toxoplasmosis, Acanthamoebae, other protozoa
- > **Parasitic infections:** Cestodes, Geohelminths and other Nematodes, Filariasis, Schistosomiasis, other Trematodes
- > **Fungal infections:** Deep mycoses, Histoplasmosis, Cryptococcal disease, other fungal infections
- > **Arthropods:** Myiasis, other Arthropod infections/infestations, Vectors of clinical importance (lice, ticks, mites fleas, flies), intermediate hosts of clinical importance (e.g. snails, Cyclopoid copepod)
- > **Infection syndromes:** Diarrhoeal diseases, Hepatitis, Meningitis, Respiratory infections, PUO/Fever, Sexually Transmitted Infections and others
- > **Neglected Tropical Diseases (as defined by WHO):** Buruli ulcer, Chagas disease, dengue and chikungunya, dracunculiasis (Guinea-worm disease), echinococcosis, foodborne trematodiasis, human African trypanosomiasis (sleeping sickness), leishmaniasis, leprosy (Hansen's disease), lymphatic filariasis, mycetoma, chromoblastomycosis and other deep mycoses, onchocerciasis (river blindness), rabies, scabies and other ectoparasitoses, schistosomiasis, soil-transmitted helminthiasis, snakebite envenoming, taeniasis/cysticercosis, trachoma, and yaws and other endemic treponematoses.

In relation to the above infections, knowledge of vaccine-preventable diseases and arthropod vectors (biology, life cycle and control measures) is also expected. Particular emphasis is given to infections that are very important in the tropics, such as HIV/AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis.

Public health (approximately 25% of the examination)

Public health aspects of the following, with reference to the tropics, are an important part of the knowledge expected for the examination, as knowledge of these may be called upon when working in the tropics:

- > Water and sanitation
- > Disaster and refugee medicine
- > Needs assessment
- > Maternal and women's health
- > Reproductive health
- > Child health
- > Mental health
- > Nutrition
- > Epidemiology
- > Health economics
- > Essential drugs
- > Immunisation
- > Primary health care
- > Clinical trials
- > Health education
- > Health policy
- > Evidence-based medicine
- > Study design/statistics

Non-communicable diseases (approximately 15% of the examination)

Non-communicable diseases often form a substantial part of the workload of the tropical doctor. Such diseases are also important as part of the differential diagnosis of a patient's symptoms, and as contributing factors for infections. It is expected that the prevention, epidemiology, manifestations, clinical course, diagnosis and management of the following non-communicable diseases should be known. An emphasis is given to the impact and management of these problems in the tropics: Diabetes, Hypertension, Cardiovascular disease, Asthma, Epilepsy, Stroke, Mental health, Rheumatic fever, Travel medicine, Bites and stings, Skin disease, Anaesthesia, Ophthalmology, Malignancies, Surgery/trauma, Drugs/alcohol, Vitamin deficiencies, Malnutrition.

Candidates are also advised to acquaint themselves fully with the advice and guidelines published by the various statutory and advisory bodies in operation for people working in the tropics (such as the World Health Organisation, UNAIDS).