



PRIVATE HEALTH

CARE WITHOUT COMPROMISE

CARE COMMUNIQUÉ

HOW TO “TRAVEL HEALTHY”

We’ve all heard the expression “Travel Safely.” But how often have you heard the words “Travel Healthy?”

Not often enough.

Health issues are often underestimated, or ignored altogether, by vacation and business travelers alike.

Whether you are planning a quick trip to Akron to see a client or jetting off to snorkel the reefs of Zanzibar, health considerations need to be part of your advance planning.

Most travelers know that medications should never be packed in checked baggage. But very few think to carry a *list* of their meds (including specific health conditions such as allergies and contact information for their primary care physician) in their wallet... which can be of enormous importance if a visit to an emergency room is necessary.

Hardly anybody plans properly in advance for environmental issues, such as altitude, heat, humidity and local sanitation, all of which can profoundly affect your health when you travel. Few travelers think to research the strengths and weaknesses of the medical

system in the country they’re heading off to. Which, in the event of illness or injury, usually means that they end up having to rely on the hotel concierge to arrange for care. That is *not* smart.

The more exotic the trip, the greater the health risk.

Today, Americans often travel to developing countries. But even if you’ve had “all the right shots,” pathogens that don’t affect the “locals” can bring US travelers to their knees. And, of course, accidents can happen anywhere.

So plan ahead. Well-trained, properly-credentialed English-speaking physicians are few and far between in most developing countries. Drug names change from country to country. (Do you know what your heart medication is called in London... in Tokyo... in Ghana?) Hospitals may not accept your insurance... and in certain instances, they may not even be equipped to accept payment in cash or by credit card, which means you may be turned away. If necessary, would you know how to arrange to be airlifted to a more suitable facility?

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"Travel Healthy" Cont'd

The "Health Itinerary"

Private Health recommends that you prepare a "Health Itinerary" for every out-of-town trip you make. The checklist that follows will help you do it... and your

travels will be safer – and healthier! (*Note for Private Health Patients planning trips: Please contact your Personal Care Team Clinical Coordinator; he or she will manage many of these tasks for you in advance of travel.*)

THE HEALTHY TRAVELER CHECKLIST

🌐 Pack a complete set of your medications in your carry-on bag, *not* in your checked luggage.

🌐 Carry a laminated card listing the *generic name and country-specific brand names* for all meds you take, as well as the *dosage and frequency*. Include contact information for your primary care physician and information on any health conditions you may have, including allergies.

🌐 Arrange for your key medical information to be converted to a digital file and carry it with you on a Thumb-Drive.

🌐 When traveling to a foreign country, find out in advance where the nearest US embassy or consulate is located.

🌐 If you're going to a country with government health care, determine which doctors/hospitals will see non-citizens. Find out if you're going to have to pay in cash or if credit cards are accepted.

🌐 If you're traveling to a country in the developing world, try to identify physicians and best-in-class hospitals in the cities you're visiting in advance of leaving the US. And have contact information with you for a medical airlift provider.

🌐 Ask your physician for specific recommendations about adjusting to changes in altitude, temperature, and water/food sanitation to avoid illness.

🌐 Find out if you're due for a tetanus booster and a hepatitis shot.

🌐 Ask your physician for a prescription for broad-spectrum antibiotics... and fill it!

🌐 Research if malaria is an issue at your destination. If necessary, check your stock of malaria pills and ensure that the hotel has mosquito nets.

🌐 For travel-related health alerts, please check the CDC web site <http://www.cdc.gov/travel>

Be careful about:

🌐 Deep vein thrombosis from frequent or prolonged flights. (Tip: Walk the length of the airplane at least once an hour.)

🌐 Motor vehicle accidents – taxis, rental cars, motor-bikes, scooters. (Tip: If you haven't been on a scooter since college, think twice before hopping on.)

🌐 Injury from strenuous activities such as skiing, biking, trekking or swimming. (Tip: Improve your fitness *before* your trip; start training at least six weeks before departure.)

🌐 Exposure to air, water or food-borne bacteria/viruses. (Tip: The "old rules" still apply... particularly in developing countries. Use bottled water... including bottled water in your room to brush your teeth. Avoid uncooked foods. Don't eat food from street vendors. Stay out of very crowded, confined spaces.)