

Health Information Guide for International Travel

Please be aware that the system of U.S. healthcare is unlikely to be replicated in your host country. With that in mind, we encourage you to talk to your health care provider(s) about your health concerns in the context of the place where you will be studying/living/working, including the potential stressors of being abroad and whether or not your particular health concerns can be managed in your chosen site abroad. You should keep in mind that mild physical or psychological conditions can become more serious under the stress of life while abroad.

Health History and Records

To prepare for your health and well-being abroad, we recommend that you contact your health care provider(s) to obtain a copy of your medical records to carry abroad with you, including the following:

- Personal health history
- Updated problem list
- Medication list
- List of allergies (including food and medications)
- Recent physical
- Immunization record
- Hospitalizations - including the history, physical, and discharge summary

If you have allergies or chronic medical conditions, it is advisable to wear an alert bracelet.

You may want to carry both a hard-copy as well as electronic copy (i.e. on thumbdrive or phone) of your health history. You should also leave this information with your emergency contact, as well as the name and contact information of your treating physician and/or mental health care provider.

Prescription Medication

If you are currently taking any prescription medication, you should talk to your health care provider and/or insurance company about the following:

- Prescribing enough to last you for the duration of your stay abroad, as it is not usually possible to mail prescription drugs overseas (not all will do this, especially for controlled substances)
- Working out a plan with your insurance company to cover the entire amount (some may only cover one month at a time, but you may be able to talk to them about reimbursements each month)
- Carrying the generic name of your prescription drugs.
- Limitations on taking your prescription medication into your host country (different countries have different classifications for drugs and what may be perfectly legal with a prescription in the U.S. may present problems if you try to take them into a foreign country).

Treatment

If you currently receive treatment for an on-going medical concern, you should consider scheduling an appointment with a health care provider in your host country in advance of leaving home to avoid a lapse in care as you wait for appointment availability.

Resources to read before departure

[U.S. Department of State's health information](#)
[Parton Center for Health and Wellness](#)