

ACCESSING HEALTH CARE ABROAD

We hope that you don't need to access health care when traveling, but you should have a plan if it becomes necessary. Here are some reliable resources for health care information:

- US Embassy/US Consulate
- Academic Trip Leaders
- Hosts
- In-country personnel employed through the organization you are traveling with

VALUABLE RESOURCES:

- [cdc.gov/travel](https://www.cdc.gov/travel)
- [princeton.edu](https://www.princeton.edu)
- [usembassy.gov](https://www.usembassy.gov)
- [jmu.edu/healthcenter/studentcare/travel-abroad.shtml](https://www.jmu.edu/healthcenter/studentcare/travel-abroad.shtml)
- JMU Counseling Center's website: <https://www.jmu.edu/counselingcenter/resources/self-help>



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Student Success Center MSC 7901

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**YOU'RE TRAVELING!
NOW WHAT?**

uhc essentials for traveling abroad





WHAT TO EXPECT ABROAD

Traveling to a foreign country is exciting, but can be a bit scary. Knowing some safety tips can ease some of this fear.



GENERAL SAFETY TIPS

In foreign countries, as in the US, following typical safety guidelines will help prevent injuries.

- Always wear seat belts.
- Avoid alcohol and cell phone use if driving.
- Avoid driving in unfamiliar areas or after dark.
- Ride only in marked taxis with seat belts and in the back seat.
- Wear helmets if using bicycles, motorcycles, or scooters.
- Be cautious when crossing the streets as a pedestrian.
- Use the buddy system.



CULTURAL & HEALTH CONSIDERATIONS

When you travel abroad, you enter cultures that may be different from your own. Do your best to familiarize yourself with the culture, health care, and how to handle situations you might encounter.



MENTAL HEALTH/WELLNESS

Because travel can be stressful, some tips we have when it comes to mental health are:

- Take prescription medication at the correct time, adjusting for time zones.
- Stay hydrated and eat well while also avoiding illicit drugs and alcohol.
- Maintain a routine that includes healthy eating, getting enough sleep, and physical activity.



SEXUAL HEALTH

Practicing safe sex is an important part of your health care. If traveling, consider the following to help prevent STIs and unplanned pregnancies:

- Bring safer sex items with you.
- If on hormonal birth control, plan ahead to have enough for the duration of the trip.
- Emergency contraceptive pill availability is country specific. Go to princeton.edu for options.



ALCOHOL & DRUG USE

Students are expected to obey all the laws of the countries they visit. It is important to learn the alcohol and other drug laws in your host country.

The drinking age in a foreign country may be different than the US and alcohol and drugs may have higher potencies. While any alcohol or drug use has some level of risk, there are guidelines that can be followed to reduce the risk for problems:

- Don't use illegal drugs and only use prescription drugs as prescribed by your doctor.
- Don't misuse or use another's prescription drugs.

No more than:

- 1 Drink in an hour
- 2 Drinks if drinking everyday
- 3 Drinks on occasion





TRIP PREPARATION: DO YOU HAVE EVERYTHING?

- Insurance
- Medication
 - Do you have your medicine?
 - Is your prescription medicine under your name?
 - Pills that are not appropriately labeled may be confiscated.
- Mobile Resources
- Contact your phone and credit card companies to ensure their services are available.
- Passport
 - Is your passport up-to-date?
- Pre-Travel Health Visit
- Self-Education
- Travel Kit

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ARE YOU PREPARED TO TRAVEL ABROAD?

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BE PREPARED!

Your health and personal safety are the MOST important aspects related to international travel. Studying and serving abroad are once in a lifetime opportunities to learn and explore new ideas and other cultures. You can experience the best of your trip with just a little help from the University Health Center!

Safe travel requires proactive planning in order to make your trip as amazing as it can be!

Follow these tips to stay safe while still having fun in the foreign country that you are traveling in.



PRE-TRAVEL HEALTH VISIT

A pre-travel health visit is recommended for any traveler going to a developing country. You may benefit from going to the travel medicine clinic in the University Health Center, where you can obtain necessary immunizations and prescriptions, and speak to a medical provider with specific travel medicine knowledge.



STRONGLY RECOMMENDED:

- Any pre-travel health visit should be scheduled at LEAST 1 month prior to departure in order to ensure any immunizations are effective.
- Patients with chronic conditions need to be sure they have enough medication to last throughout the trip and that their doctor is agreeable to their travel plans.
- If doing any unusual activities related to travel that may require specific consideration, such as mountain climbing or scuba diving, let your doctor or the travel clinic know.



TRAVELER'S HEALTH KIT

The following items should be considered when packing for your trip:

- Prescription medicines you usually take
- Special prescriptions for the trip, such as anti-malarial medication
- Over-the-counter medicines, such as allergy pills and ibuprofen
- First-Aid Supplies
 - Disposable gloves (2+ pairs)
 - Band-Aids (various sizes), gauze, adhesive tape
 - Elastic bandage (Ace wrap)
 - Antibiotic ointment
 - Anti-itch gel or cream for insect bites and stings
 - Sunscreen and aloe gel for sunburns
 - Moleskin or molefoam for blisters
 - Condoms and other safer-sex products

A list can be found at:
wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/page/pack-smart.



INSECT BITE PREVENTION

Here are some final quick prevention tips to minimize insect bites:

- Clothing should cover as much skin as reasonably possible.
- Avoid brightly colored clothing because it attracts insects. Use a mosquito net at night and tuck the edges under the mattress.
- Use air conditioning, if it's available, to diminish mosquito activity.
- Check for ticks daily.
- Pre-treat clothes, nets, and bedding with Permethrin.
- Any skin that is exposed should be covered with a mosquito repellent. Meet with your doctor and take appropriate medication prior to, during, and after the trip to diminish the risk for malaria.

If you develop any significant illness after traveling to a developing country, seek medical evaluation and report your travel itinerary.



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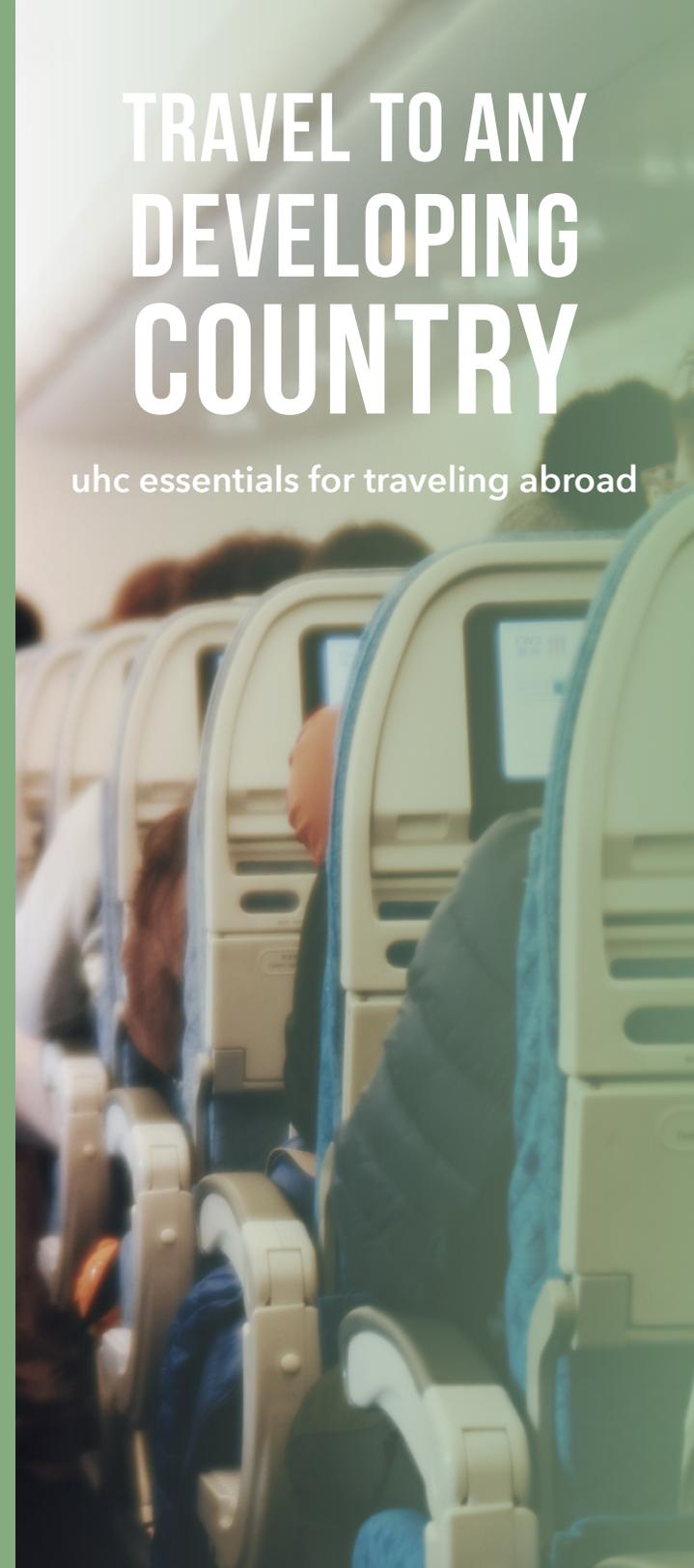
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TRAVEL TO ANY DEVELOPING COUNTRY

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BE CAREFUL!

When traveling to a developing country, it is important to focus on food, water and diseases carried by insects. Daily necessities we take for granted when living in the US may not be safe when visiting a developing country.



WATER

Presume that tap water is not safe to drink. Follow these tips to avoid getting sick:

- Tap water is adequate for bathing, but should not be consumed through drinking or even brushing teeth. When showering, keep mouth shut to avoid ingesting contaminated water.
- Water-based drinks are safe when made from boiled water.
- Beverages from factory-sealed containers are safe to drink, but the outside of the container may still be contaminated.
- Stay hydrated with purified or bottled water from sealed plastic containers. Avoid drinks with ice.



FOOD

If you are being hosted, ask your hosts about food safety. Individuals who are traveling on their own must be even more cautious and should access the app "Can I Eat This." Food-related illnesses include:

- Diarrhea
- Typhoid
- Cholera
- Hepatitis A

Some basic rules regarding food safety in developing countries are:

- Avoid any raw food.
- Fresh fruits are only safe if you peel them yourself. Do not consume the outside of unpeeled fruit.
- Dry foods like bread or cakes are usually safe, as well as food that is well-cooked and served hot. Avoid food that has been sitting for extended periods of time.



ANIMALS

In developing countries, it's unlikely that domestic animals, such as cats and dogs, have received the rabies vaccine. It is best to avoid contact with all animals. If your travel includes participating in mammal research, ask about any concerns with rabies or other animal-related diseases in and around the research site.



INSECTS

Another risk is disease spread by the bites of infected insects such as mosquitoes and ticks. Diseases can be transmitted by:

- Mosquitoes
- Ticks
- Flies
- Lice

Some mosquito-borne illnesses are:

- Dengue fever
- Malaria
- Zika
- Yellow Fever
- Japanese Encephalitis
- West Nile Virus

