TIPS FOR STUDENT TRAVELERS
Adapted from MSASS International Study Abroad Courses

Read carefully before going and carry with you for reference
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This information is meant to be a general guide. Please contact faculty leader for more specific information for the country you will be visiting.

Before you leave:

Place the contents of your wallet and passport on a photocopy machine: make Xerox copies of your passport (part with photo and passport number), driver’s license, credit cards, medical information, front and back, so that you have the proper information and phone numbers in case of loss. Carry separate from your passport and wallet and also leave copies with family or friend not on trip. Also leave itinerary and flight info with someone back home.

Call both your bank and credit card company so that they know you will be overseas (banks may get suspicious of large sums of money being transferred overseas and may stop your ability to access money believing it to be in your best interest). Confirm that your ATM can be used internationally. Check what exchange rate is. Often your bank credit card gives best rate. You may also choose to use Traveler’s Checks.

Look at weather.com You can get a 10 day forecast.

IMPORTANT- wear money belt or fanny pack under clothes. You can also purchase anti-theft bags (purses, backpacks, etc): www.pacsafe.com Pick pocketing is common in some places especially on the public transportation and crowded places.

If your items are stolen, be sure to file a Police report as soon as possible. (This will become your legal document if your passport is stolen). Please call the national credit reporting organizations immediately to place a fraud alert on your name and social security number.

Equifax: 1-800-525-6285; Experian – 1-888-397-3742
Trans Union – 1-800-680-7289; Social Security Administration (fraud line) 1-800-629-0271

****Get to airport a minimum of two hours early!

Packing

Luggage identification should not only be on the outside of your luggage, but also inside in case the tag is torn off.

Security For the most up-to-date information pertaining to security see: www.tsa.gov

You are allowed 2 suitcases you can check in and 2 carry on

** Checked luggage Less is more. Most airlines (but check online with airline in advance) allow 2 suitcases (check in); each not weighing over 50 lbs (suggestion: weigh before you leave home); You
will be charged a lot for the extra weight on checked in luggage. Suggestion: If you plan to bring back a lot, bring a **second suitcase!** You can pack second suitcase in first suitcase and then have to bring home gifts. **You can also get a tsa (transportation security administration) approved lock for your suitcase.** PACK LIGHT! Only need casual clothes and maybe one nice outfit

**Carry on luggage (purse or laptop count as one)** IMPORTANT- carry on should have everything you cannot live without! This includes original passport, money, travelers checks, ATM and credit cards and all I.D.s. All prescription (in original container) or any medicines you need or think you will need, camera, ANY valuables (or better, leave these at home) and one clear quart size zip top bag carrying any 3 ounce liquids. Anything that can pour out is considered a liquid. When possible, pack liquids in checked baggage. Pack anything replaceable (toothpaste, shampoo, lotion, etc) in check in suitcase. Bring in carry on what you will want for the flight (travel pillow/ear plugs or noise cancellation devises, eye shades, ipod, etc for the plane! Also bring good book and your journal and pen. Also, bring snacks, extra water, wipes and slipper and socks (or wear shoes you can make larger- feet swell on the flight) May also want to bring toothbrush and small toothpaste (has to go in ziplock bag) and a change of clothes and underwear in case of flight delay/cancellation.

**Going through Security**

- The secret to getting through security smoothly is to de-clutter your carry-on bag. This lets Transportation Security Officers get a clear, uncomplicated X-ray image of your carry-on. Also, if items are neatly packed there is less likely your bag will get searched which takes more time.

- At the checkpoint travelers will be asked to remove the zip-top bag of liquids and place it in a bin or on the conveyor belt. You will need to take off shoes and coats as well as laptop (if you bring) and place on conveyor belt.

- After clearing security, travelers can bring beverages and other items purchased in the secure boarding area on-board aircraft. Suggestion: buy a few bottles of water for the flight so as to not dehydrate.

**Other Information and reminders to know in advance:**

- Best to have on hand, Pepto-bismal (Suggestion: take with every meal to coat stomach in some parts of the world) and anti diarrhea medicine. Bring extra glasses (or prescription), extra reading and sun glasses, inhalers, (pollution can be bad in some places) and maybe even face mask; bug spray with deet, sun lotion for some places; Bring along a basic first aid kit with bandages, iodine, alcohol packets, dramamine, etc.

- **Be flexible**… flights can change or be delayed; parts of programs may have to be changed or substituted due to variables beyond anyone’s control

- Make sure you can use your insurance coverage overseas and if not, you may want to purchase additional travel insurance coverage.

- Don’t exchange a large amount of money prior to the trip, it is safer to use the ATMs or bring travelers checks.

- Credit Cards may be used at many locations (but not all!) Many restaurants and stores do not take credit cards. Depending on location some places DO NOT accept Discover and American Express (check with your faculty leader)
• Suggestion: bring small bottle of Febreeze, other fabric refresher product or linen spray (can be smoky or unfamiliar scents in some areas). Suggestion: dryer sheet in suitcase keeps clothes smelling fresh.
• Wear comfortable shoes! Have two pairs to allow shoes to be dried if wet.
• Bring small bottle of clothes detergent or soap and clothes line to wash if place doesn’t provide laundry (check with your faculty leader).
• Bring a small flashlight. You never know when you'll suddenly be "in the dark" and find yourself in unfamiliar surroundings. At night, keep your flashlight by your bed.
• Culture Shock (more info later) is normal and expected- please talk to others and program leaders as well as to journal.
• Homesickness can occur anytime (especially after newness has worn off); It will pass and remind yourself this is only a temporary short term program.
• On some programs you are able to leave the group; Always travel with someone, have the hotel address and phone number with you.
• “When in Rome, do as the Romans!” Understanding cultural differences is what the program is all about. The program is meant to take you out of your comfort zone (be prepared).
• Many things you will experience are not what you are use to and please withhold judgment. Some examples maybe animals walking around and living in public; pollution and different smells, crowded places, small accommodations, etc
• If you are told do not drink water, adhere to this- and peel all fruits and vegetables and brush teeth with bottled water.
• If you are somewhere with spicy foods, introduce slowly.
• Never wear anything that projects affluence. No gold chains, expensive watches and rings. Better yet: leave your jewelry at home.
• If possible travel with only one or two credit cards.
• Women particularly should never accept a drink from a stranger. Keep an eye on your drink at all times.
• Do not wear name tags in public.
• Do not use unmarked taxi cabs.
• Do not flash your passport in public. Discreetly show important documents to officials only.
• If detained for whatever reason by an official, ask for identification.
• Watch for scams on the street. Children working with adults are notorious as pickpockets.
• Never flash your money in public. Exchange funds with reputable and recognized exchangers only.

**Cell Phones and Computers**

• Your U.S. cell phone will most likely not work. (check in advance)
• You can buy internationally calling card even before you leave (be sure it has access to country you are going to) or you may be able to use credit card.
• Email can be checked at internet cafes and other locations (check with faculty leader)

Jet Lag

These are the classic symptoms

Fatigue and disorientation

Becoming tired and disoriented for days after arriving. Lack of concentration and motivation, especially for any activity that requires some effort or skill, like driving, reading, or discussing a business deal. But even simple activities can become harder.

Interrupted sleep

Crossing time zones can cause you to wake up during the night or make it difficult to get to sleep. You then end up trying to get to sleep during the day. Your built-in circadian rhythms have been disturbed. And it can take many days to readjust to the new time zone. In fact, NASA estimates that you'll need one day for every one-hour time zone crossed to get back to your normal rhythm and energy levels.

Confusion and fuzziness

Having to go back to check two or three times to see if your hotel room was left locked or unlocked.

Getting uptight

"Losing it" is another symptom reported. And that helps explain why long distance flights can get very tedious toward the end. What's more, going through customs and immigration, then getting to your hotel can seem like a real challenge. In addition to the above symptoms of jet lag, the syndrome is made even worse by some common physical problems caused by being cooped up in an airliner for hours.

Dehydration

That dry air aboard your aircraft can give you headaches, irritate your nostrils and dry your skin. In addition, you'll be more susceptible to any colds, coughs, sore throats and flu that may be floating around the aircraft. (suggestion: take airborne to help prevent colds)

Uncomfortable legs and feet
Swollen limbs can be extremely uncomfortable. In some cases, it could actually prevent you from wearing your normal shoes for up to 24 hours after you land. (suggestion: take off shoes on flight and wear socks and slippers - do not go barefoot especially in bathroom!). Or wear shoes a bit larger.

**WHAT CAUSES JET LAG?**

**Crossing time zones**
The main, but not the only cause of jet lag is crossing time zones. Adults who adjust readily to changes of routine seem less susceptible to jet lag.

**Your pre-flight condition**
If you're over-tired, excited, stressed, nervous, or hung over before the flight, you are setting yourself up for a good dose of jet lag. How many times have you heard travelers say "Don't worry, I'll catch up on the flight"? Well you don't. The wise traveler who wants to get the most out of a trip has a good night's sleep prior to departure.

**Dry atmosphere**
The air aboard passenger jet aircraft is dry. The dryness can cause headaches, dry skin and dry nasal and throat membranes, creating the conditions for catching colds, coughs, sore throats or the flu. Drinking plenty of water helps. Some airlines supply water frequently to passengers, but others only have a small water fountain near the toilets. Coffee, tea, alcoholic drinks and fruit juices are not recommended. Water is what your body wants.

**Cabin pressure**
At a cruising altitude of near 30,000' the aircraft is pressurized to near 8,000'. Unless you live near 8,000' and are acclimatized to this pressure you may suffer from swelling, tiredness and lethargy.

**Stale air**
Providing a constant supply of fresh air in the cabin costs the airlines money, and some airlines are more willing to oblige than others. A lack of good air helps make you tired and irritable and can cause headaches.

**Alcohol**
The impact of alcohol on the body is 2-3 times more potent when you're flying. One glass of wine in-flight has the effect of 2-3 glasses on the ground. Add this to the other problems mentioned here, and you can get off the plane with a huge hangover that simply compounds the effects of jet lag.

**Food and drink**
Airline coffee and tea have a higher than usual caffeine content and are abrasive on the stomach. Orange juice is also abrasive if you are not used to it. If you don't normally drink really strong coffee, tea or orange juice, don't try it while flying. Also go easy on the frequent meals served in-flight. You don't need them. And sitting in a cramped position puts extra pressure on your stomach. Also beware risky foods served on some airlines in certain parts of the world, including salads and cold meat and fish. According to WHO, 50% of international travelers get stomach problems, so dietary care is important while flying.

** HOW TO REDUCE JET LAG **

**Pre-flight**
This is one of the most important aspects of combating jet lag. Before departing, make sure you have all your affairs, business and personal, in order. Ensure you are not stressed-out with excitement or worry, and not tired or hung over from a function the night before. Get plenty of exercise in the days prior to departure and try to avoid sickness such as the flu, colds and so on. Get a good night's sleep just prior to departure.

**Drinking fluids**
The dry air in aircraft causes dehydration. Drinking plenty of non-alcoholic fluids counters this. Water is better than coffee, tea and fruit juices.

**Sleeping aids**
Blindfolds, ear plugs, neckrests and blow-up pillows are all useful in helping you get quality sleep while flying. Kick your shoes off to ease pressure on the feet.

**Exercise**
Get as much exercise as you can. Walking up and down the aisle, standing for spells, and doing small twisting and stretching exercises in your seat all help to reduce discomfort, especially swelling of legs and feet. Get off the plane if possible at stopovers, and do some exercises or take a walk. This also helps to reduce the possibility of blood clots and associated trauma. While seated, contract/release every muscle in your body. Also, whenever you can, get up and walk around the plane and do some stretches. This will help reduce many physical and mental symptoms of jetlag.
Clothing  Loose and layered.
Wear loose clothing on the airplane because our bodies inevitably swell up on board. The low-air pressure inside the cabin creates an "interior altitude" of 8000 feet and we swell up like the Michelin tire man. Tight clothing can dangerously impede circulation and trigger deep vein thrombosis. Watch out for tight belts, girdles, bras, rings, and shoes.

Attitude. Stay "up" in the air.
How we talk to ourselves affects our health. This is a known fact in healing and in business. For flying, here's an affirmation, which you might want to try in case you feel nervous on board: *I count my Blessings and do my best. I have faith that the Almighty Pilot takes care of the rest.*

Sleeping pills (don't!) Some people use sleeping tablets to try to alleviate jet lag. This is a dangerous approach as sleeping pills induce a comatose state with little or no natural body movement, and it is well known that prolonged immobility during flight can lead to fatal blood clots (deep vein thrombosis). In addition, many so-called sleeping pills are variants on anti-histamines and they tend to dehydrate significantly, adding to the already significant problem of in-flight dehydration.

On the Ground
Upon landing, start eating and sleeping on the new schedule. Studies prove that circadian rhythms can also be shifted with exposure to bright light; Dr. Martin Moore-Ede, professor at Harvard Medical School, recommends you expose yourself to bright daylight, without sunglasses, for at least fifteen minutes as soon as you can. Meanwhile, the Mayo Clinic recommends early-morning and late-afternoon exercise to help resynchronize your clock. Take hot baths and drink lots of water for several days to help with detoxification.

No Quick Fix
There is no quick fix to alleviate all the symptoms of jetlag.

First of all, spend some time outside during daylight hours. Natural light automatically cues our cells to the new local cosmology.

If you can do only one thing, adjust your bedtime to the new, local timetable as soon as possible. Along with the adoption of the local bedtime, try doing what the locals do: their food preferences, meal times, recreational activities, etc

STRATEGIES
1. Spend some time every day outdoors.
2. Set your watch to local time.
3. Sleep and eat on local time.

SET YOUR WATCH, FOCUS YOUR MIND
All our internal cycles (temperature, sleep, cravings for sweets, reactions to medications, and more) are programmable, like computers.

You can program yours to bounce back from jetlag with adaptability and resilience.

Start by focusing your thoughts and feelings on your desired goals--determine to enjoy well-being as you skirt the globe.

And be sure to set our watch to your destination local time as soon as possible after takeoff.

"Jetlag is not psychological; it is cycle logical."

Code of Ethics for Travelers

- Travel in a spirit of humility with a genuine desire to learn more about the people of your host country.
- Be sensitive to the feelings of other people, thus preventing what might be offensive behavior on your part. This applies to photography as well.
- Cultivate the habit of listening and observing, rather than merely hearing and seeing.
- Realize that often the people in the country you visit have time concepts and patterns different than your own; this does not make them inferior, only different.
- Instead of looking for that beach paradise, discover the enrichment of seeing a different way of life, through other eyes.
- Acquaint yourself with local customs—people will help you.
- Instead of the western practice of knowing all the answers, cultivate the habit of asking questions.
- Remember that you are only one of the thousands of tourists visiting this country and do not expect special privileges.
- If you really want your experience to be a home away from home, it is foolish to waste money on traveling.
- When you are shopping, remember that bargain you obtained was only possible because of the low wages paid to the maker.
- Do not make promises to people in your host country unless you are certain you can carry them through.
- Spend time reflecting on your daily experiences in an attempt to deepen your understanding.

*First issued in 1975 by the Christian Conference of Asia*

Adjustments and Culture Shock

Experiencing new cultures, and obtaining a better understanding of your own culture, can result in some of the most positive, life-altering experiences students have while studying abroad. When going abroad, students will experience differences in manners, beliefs, customs, laws, language, art, religion, values, concept of self, family organization, social organization, government, behavior, etc. All of these elements combine to form your host country’s rich and unique culture. While the introduction to new and foreign cultures greatly benefits students, it can also be overwhelming. The new cultural elements a student encounters abroad may be so different that they seem "shocking" in comparison to cultural norms they are used to at home. As Bruce La Brack writes in his article "The Missing Linkage: The Process of Integrating Orientation and Reentry":

"Just as you can't really describe the taste of a hot fudge sundae to someone who has never experienced one, it is difficult to actually convey just how disorienting entering another culture can be to a student without any cross-cultural experience."
Rhinesmith's Ten Stages of Adjustment

Culture shock and its effects can occur in a number of stages. However, culture shock is not an exact step-by-step process; every student doesn't experience culture shock the same way or at the same time. The following 10 steps of cultural adjustment show how culture shock can be like a roller coaster ride of emotions:

1. initial anxiety
2. initial elation
3. initial culture shock
4. superficial adjustment
5. depression-frustration
6. acceptance of host culture
7. return anxiety
8. return elation
9. re-entry shock
10. reintegration

Riding the roller coaster of culture shock, a student actually follows a natural pattern of hitting peaks and valleys. The high points of excitement and interest are succeeded by lower points of depression, disorientation, or frustration. Each student will experience these ups and downs in different degrees of intensity and for different lengths of time. The process is necessary in order to make the transition from one culture to another; it helps a student or traveler to balance out and adjust.

**Stages 1 through 5: Exposure to a new culture**

Prior to going abroad, students may be excited about new adventures to come. At first, a student's expectations may be too high. A student may be heavily comparing and contrasting his/her home culture with the culture abroad. It is common for students to focus on what they see as weaknesses in foreign cultures. Students tend to point out what a foreign culture lacks; this often leads to feelings of frustration over what is "missing" or what can't be obtained abroad in the same ways it can be at home. Negative feelings and frustrations may reach a level where you begin to recognize you are going through "culture shock".

**Stage 6: Acceptance of a new culture**

As a student gets used to the host country’s ways, things that seemed like a "crisis" may now simply be seen as different ways of doing things. Most students gradually adjust their lifestyles to be balanced with a country's own cultural norms. The cultural traits that once annoyed or bothered a student generally come to be accepted as normal. Students usually begin to understand and appreciate the cultural differences between the United States and the host country. However, if significant problems arise, a student may briefly return to the "frustration" stage of culture shock.

**Stages 7 through 10: Leaving a new culture behind**

As a student becomes integrated to the ways of the host country’s culture, the more difficult it may be to re-adapt to the United States upon return home. The United States just won't look the same way it did before leaving to study abroad; a student may see home with new eyes and may also be more critical of U.S. cultural traditions once thought to be "normal". This is called reverse culture shock. Fear of experiencing reverse culture shock should not deter students from trying to integrate as fully as possible while abroad.

- **Important to be aware of stages and to read as much as possible about the country you will be visiting in advance to gain perspective; Also talk to veteran travelers**
- **Helpful to be open to changes, differences, and new horizons**
Homesickness

Homesickness is one of the most common adjustment problems related to culture shock and loneliness. Experienced by students from every country, homesickness is a universal side affect to being away from home. Homesickness occurs because students feel separated from all that is familiar. Feelings of homesickness may even start before you leave to study abroad and you may find yourself mildly depressed or anxious several weeks before leaving. The anticipation and preparation for this major change of lifestyle can trigger pre-departure homesickness, or sudden feelings that you don’t want to leave, or even a want to back out of your decision to study abroad. Some students might experience homesickness within the first few days of being abroad. Holidays, birthdays, anniversaries, family events or even family illness or death can all cause you to feel homesick, or make you wish you were at home. Also, many students report increased feelings of homesickness during the winter months when darkness, rainy weather and the cold can lead to feelings of depression.

The following are a few tips to help you cope with feelings of homesickness:

• Don’t wait for homesickness to go away by itself. Confront your feelings by talking to someone (faculty leader, family member, roommate, or another student, etc.) about your homesickness. Chances are that the other students in your program may be feeling the same way you are.
• Bring some of home along with you. Be sure to pack photos of family and friends, bring your favorite CDs
• Be patient with yourself as you adjust to the unexpected realities of being abroad, and how abroad is not like home.
• Get involved by seeking out opportunities that keep you busy and occupied so that you won’t think about home.

More on Packing:

Less is more. You want to have comforts abroad, yet you know you can't bring everything with you. Also, part of the reason you are going abroad is to get out of your comfort zone and away from home; therefore, you will have to prepare to make do with fewer things.

When you travel, you probably won't want to lug around a lot of stuff. You are most likely going to acquire things while travelling, including souvenirs, clothes, gifts, etc… You will need some extra packing space in order to fit in these newly acquired items.

Don't be a packing procrastinator. Packing before your flight just isn't a smart idea. Packing takes planning, and you will most likely pack and re-pack a number of times before you're satisfied (and before you can cram everything into your bags so they shut properly!)

**WHAT TO PACK?**

Most travelers pack too much clothing. Take only what you expect to wear. Although public laundry service is available in some places where students will be staying (or you can wash and hang where you are staying), it is advised to bring dark colors that will not readily show the dirt. Your clothing should be hand washable and require little care. Learn the typical climate of the locations you plan to visit. You can acquire other inexpensive items in your host country that will have the advantage of fitting with current trends in fashion and make you less identifiable as a foreigner. The following list is a helpful guide and should be adjusted according to the seasonal weather you will experience during your stay abroad. Also, check with faculty leader for what is most important for the country you will be visiting. These are just suggestions and by all means, not all necessary!
Clothing
- walking shoes
- flip-flops or shower shoes
- socks
- underwear
- shorts
- skirts/trousers
- shirts
- sweater/sweatshirt/T-shirt
- poncho/rain jacket
- light jacket
- bathing suit (for some places)
- hat
- a nice (dress) outfit
- T-shirts (cotton)
- Towel and wash cloth
- Some persons prefer to bring their own sheet and pillow case

Medicine and Toiletries
- Prescription medicine: clearly marked with patient name, physician name, drug name, dosage, and written physician prescription explaining the condition and use (NOTE: this may be required in order to bring these medications through customs and into the country.)
- Over-the-counter unopened medication (i.e., any medications you take on a regular basis or those that are especially effective for you): Although your host country may have the same drug, it is probably called something different and may be difficult to identify at your time of need or not available at all.
- First Aid Kit: include bandages, first aid tape, antiseptic wipes, burn cream, extra-strength aspirin, anti-diarrhea medication, antihistamines, and first aid guide
- Comb and/or brush
- Sunscreen, moisturizers, cosmetics, bug repellant
- Water purification tablets and malaria prophylaxis (if applicable)
- Deodorant/antiperspirant
- Razor
- Tampons/sanitary pads
- Contraceptives/birth control/prophylactics
- Eyeglasses (extra pair), sunglasses, contact lenses and cleaning solution
- Hand sanitizer

Miscellaneous
- Battery operated alarm clock
- Watch
- Camera and film
- Ipod, Walkman or portable CD player and CDs
- Flashlight (head lamps are a hands’ free option)
- Address book
- Travel journal
- Pocket calculator
- Books, guides, and maps
- Day pack
• Laundry soap and line, clothes pins
• Sewing kit (this must be packed in your checked luggage)
• Stuff bags, plastic storage bags
• Change purse/fanny pack
• Umbrella
• TSA Luggage lock and tag
• Batteries
• Adapter and voltage converter
• Extra set of passport photos of yourself
• Photos from home
• Bottler opener (check in with suitcase)
• Lighter or matches (check in with suitcase)

**Documents, etc. (to carry on your person)**

• Passport
• Tickets or info needed for E-ticket
• ISIC card (if purchased)
• Cash, travelers checks, credit cards or ATM card
• Any medical insurance ID card
• Driver’s license or State ID

**Other information to have on hand**

*Internet*
The most convenient source of information about travel and consular services is the Consular Affairs home page. The web site address is [http://travel.state.gov](http://travel.state.gov).

*Telephone*
Overseas Citizens Services at 1-888-407-4747 can answer general inquiries on safety and security overseas. This number is available from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. Eastern Time, Monday through Friday (except U.S. federal holidays). Callers who are unable to use toll-free numbers, such as those calling from overseas, can obtain information and assistance from OCS during these hours by calling 1-202-501-4444.

*In Person*
Consular Information Sheets, Travel Warnings and Public Announcements are available at any of the regional passport agencies and U.S. Embassies and consulates abroad.

*Local Laws and Custom*
When you leave the United States, you are subject to the laws of the country you are visiting. Therefore, before you go, learn as much as you can about the local laws and customs of the places you plan to visit. Good resources are your library, your travel agent, and the embassies, consulates or tourist bureaus of the countries you will visit. In addition, keep track of what is being reported in the media about recent developments in those countries.

Register your travel
It is a good idea to register your travel with the State Department so that you may be contacted if need be, whether because of a family emergency in the U.S., or because of a crisis in the area in which you are traveling. Travel registration is a free service provided by the State Department, and is easily accomplished online at [https://travelregistration.state.gov](https://travelregistration.state.gov). (In accordance with the Privacy Act, the Department of State may not release information on your welfare or whereabouts to inquirers without your express written authorization.)
Credit
Make a note of the credit limit on each credit card that you bring, and avoid charging over that limit while traveling. Americans have been arrested for innocently exceeding their credit limit. Ask your credit card company how to report the loss of your card from abroad. 1-800 numbers do not work from abroad, but your company should have a number that you can call while you are overseas.

Insurance
Find out if your personal property insurance covers you for loss or theft abroad. Also, check on whether your health insurance covers you abroad. Medicare and Medicaid do not provide payment for medical care outside the United States. Even if your health insurance will reimburse you for medical care that you pay for abroad, health insurance usually does not pay for medical evacuation from a remote area or from a country where medical facilities are inadequate. Consider purchasing a policy designed for travelers, and covering short-term health and emergency assistance, as well as medical evacuation in the event of an accident or serious illness.

ASSISTANCE ABROAD

The Consular Section can provide updated information on the security situation in a country.

If you are ill or injured, contact the nearest U.S. embassy or consulate for a list of local physicians and medical facilities. If you request, consular officers will help you contact family or friends. If necessary, a consul can assist in the transfer of funds from family or friends in the United States. Payment of hospital and other medical expenses is your responsibility.

Should you find yourself in legal difficulty, contact a consular officer immediately. Consular officers cannot serve as attorneys, give legal advice, or get you out of jail. If you are arrested, consular officials will visit you, advise you of your rights under local laws, provide a list of local attorneys who speak English and who may have had experience in representing U.S. citizens, and ensure that you are held under humane conditions and are treated fairly under local law. A consular officer will contact your family or friends if you desire. When necessary, consuls can transfer money from home for you and will try to get relief for you, including food and clothing in countries where this is a problem. If you are detained, remember that under international treaties and customary international law, you have the right to talk to the U.S. consul. If you are denied this right, be politely persistent. Try to have someone get in touch for you.

Resources for U.S. Citizen Crime Victims
When a U.S. citizen becomes the victim of a crime overseas he or she may suffer physical, emotional, or financial injuries. The emotional impact of the crime may be intensified if the victim is in unfamiliar surroundings, far away from sources of comfort and support, and not fluent in the local language or knowledgeable about local laws and customs. Consuls and consular agents can provide assistance to U.S. citizen crime victims.

If you become the victim of a crime overseas, contact the nearest U.S. embassy, consulate, or consular agency for assistance. Also contact local police to report the incident and obtain immediate help with safety concerns.

While consular officials cannot investigate a crime, provide legal advice, represent you in court, serve as official interpreters or translators, or pay legal, medical, or other fees for U.S. citizens, they can assist crime victims in many other ways. Consular personnel overseas are familiar with local government agencies and resources in the countries in which they are located, and they can help you:

- replace a stolen passport
- contact family, friends, or employers
• obtain appropriate medical care
• address emergency needs that arise as a result of the crime
• obtain general information about the local criminal justice process and information about your case
• obtain information about local resources to assist victims, including foreign crime victim compensation programs
• obtain information about crime victim assistance and compensation programs in the U.S.
• obtain a list of local attorneys who speak English

Want more information?

http://travel.state.gov/travel/tips/safety/safety
http://www.studyabroad.com
http://www.cdc.gov/index.htm
http://www.tsa.gov/travelers/airtravel
http://usembassy.state.gov/
http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/jet-lag/SL00012
http://www.flyana.com/jetlag.html
http://www.travelsense.org/tips/packing.asp
http://www.travelsense.org/consumer/alerts.asp