

# Pre-travel Checklist

## Medical Preparation When Traveling

Guarding your health away from home is important, so we've put together a list of things to do to help minimize the risks. Many of these recommendations are provided by the GeoBlue® international community of physicians. If you have a medical condition, particularly one that requires regular treatment or medication, please contact us prior to your departure. We'll provide the resources you need to manage your health while you're away.

---

## Learn about the specific health risks in your destination and obtain vaccinations from a qualified physician

- Be aware of the risks associated with your host country. Is the water safe to drink? Are malaria and yellow fever a threat?
- Remember that some vaccines require time to take effect or need multiple injections over a few months
- Confirm that your standard vaccines (i.e., diphtheria/tetanus) are up to date

## Visit your primary care physician and dentist to obtain medical history and records

- Ask whether any routine tests can be performed prior to departure
- Bring copies of your medical records detailing medical history, current medical conditions and treatment plans
- Obtain duplicates of important test results and bring two copies of everything
- Consider storing your personal medical history electronically

## Select a qualified physician in your host country

- Review as much physician information as possible, including medical education, board certification status, etc.
- If you are being treated for a chronic or serious medical condition, consider arranging an appointment to review your condition and treatment plan in advance
- Review hours of operation and ask how the physician can be reached after hours
- Arrange direct payment via the GeoBlue mobile app or Member Hub up to 48 hours before your scheduled appointment to avoid paying out of pocket for medical treatment

## Check availability and translate the names of medications you use

- Check to see if your medications are available in your host country and translate the names of the medications you use
- Learn the generic names, which may be familiar to physicians and pharmacists if the brand name is not
- If you require injections (i.e., allergy, insulin), get a letter from your doctor describing the shot's components and administration instructions

## Pack medications, a first aid kit and a medical reference book about common conditions and treatments

- Carry an adequate supply of your medications (at least three months) in case there is a delay in finding an equivalent supply
- Bring extra prescription glasses and contacts along with prescription information
- Bring an extensive first aid kit that includes: bandages, splints, tweezers, over-the-counter medications, vitamins, analgesics, decongestants, antacids, contact lens solution, sunscreen, bug repellent, contraceptives
- If you have severe allergies, bring injectable epinephrine for unexpected allergic reactions
- Leave all medications in their original bottles and include a physician's letter of explanation in your medical records
- Use the medical translation and medicine equivalent tool on the GeoBlue mobile app to translate medical terms and phrases for many symptoms and situations; use the audio feature to play the translations

## Understand the healthcare system in the host country

- Be knowledgeable about the country's foreign healthcare system. What hospitals are preferred for routine care, trauma or emergencies? What are the differences between private and public hospitals regarding quality of care and availability of services?
- Learn not only the emergency telephone numbers for ambulance, fire, poison control and other such resources, but also whether these numbers and the ambulance system are reliable
- Have a basic knowledge about pharmacies: hours of operation, product reliability and staff trustworthiness
- Prescriptions you receive in your destination may not be labeled with directions; make sure you familiarize yourself with the instructions before using

## Develop a contingency plan in case of a serious event or illness

- Know how to get out of the country as quickly as possible in case a better medical facility is needed
- Have an evacuation plan which can be shared with friends and family, both at home and abroad. What is the preferred hospital in your home country for transfer? How can a transfer be arranged? What host country facility or regional referral center is preferred if transport home is medically unwise?

## Prepare for the psychological aspects of life abroad, including culture adjustment and culture shock

- Quickly gain an appreciation for your host country's language, culture and history while retaining a positive outlook
- To deal with culture shock, hone your coping skills (i.e., keeping in touch with friends and family, exercising, maintaining regular sleep habits and finding or continuing hobbies you enjoy)
- Because an overseas experience can worsen or even precipitate mental illness, do not hesitate to seek the advice of a mental health professional through Global Wellness Assist or a primary care physician

## Evaluate your health insurance benefits

### Does your plan...

- Provide emergency evacuation and international medical assistance services?
- Cover the cost of emergency evacuation?
- Arrange direct payment to overseas hospitals that may otherwise require payment up front?
- Waive any pre-certification rules for medical procedures performed abroad?
- Cover services for chronic and other non-emergency conditions while abroad?
- Apply co-payments and deductibles for care abroad?
- Cover prescription drugs purchased abroad?
- Cover psychological counseling abroad?

### Whether you are studying, working or living abroad, we know it's a major life adjustment!

We hope this checklist gives you the added confidence as you embark on this exciting adventure. We are dedicated to ensuring your healthcare experience abroad is as stress-free as possible, and are **here for you 24/7/365** with the resources to make your experience the best it can be.



**Questions?**  
Contact GeoBlue Customer Service

Inside the U.S.: **1-844-268-2686**

Outside the U.S.: **+1-610-263-2847**

Email: **Please email through the GeoBlue mobile app or Member Hub**