



Top 10 Health and Safety Issues for International Travel

1. **Be Informed** – Take the time to research the country you where will be spending time. The US State Department and Center for Disease Control are excellent resources to help you gain a better understanding of safety and health issues abroad. Remember the more you know before you go, the wiser decisions you will be able to make while abroad.
2. **Dangerous Activities** – Bungee jumping, whitewater rafting, mountain climbing and shark diving all sound like fun but can be very dangerous activities. Before you decide to participate, make sure the operators have legitimate licenses. While seeing a shark up close is a trip highlight – you don't want it to be the last thing you ever see.
3. **EAP** – Have an **Emergency Action Plan** set in place before leaving the US. The more prepared you are for an emergency the better you will be able to respond. Consider the following: Where will you go if you need to leave the country? What should you do if you are a victim of crime? What should you do if you are injured or ill?
4. **Be Aware** – To avoid being a victim of crime, violence, sexual harassment and/or assault be aware of your surroundings and the safe/unsafe parts of town. If the locals don't go to a certain part of town, you shouldn't either. Don't travel alone (have a buddy), be more careful at night, be aware of cultural stereotypes and customs. Let someone know where you will be, how to reach you and when you plan to return. Leave a copy of your itinerary with friends/family in the US but also keep those you're travelling with informed of your plans for the day.
5. **Transportation** – While you will need to get around in other countries do so with caution. Do not use unmarked taxis. Make sure you are aware of the safest routes and times to travel.
6. **Local Laws** – Make sure you are aware of the local laws including traffic, substance use and social laws to name a few. Foreign jails/prisons are nothing like those in the USA and not a place you will want to visit.
7. **Communicate** – Family and friends will want to be able to communicate while you're overseas. Leave a copy of where you can be reached including a cell phone number, hotel number, email and/or fax number.
8. **Medical** – Prior to going abroad consider getting a physical and taking care of any foreseeable dental work. Be sure you have plenty of necessary prescription and over-the-counter medications. International travel wears on the mind and body, so take this into consideration as you prepare to travel.
9. **Insurance** – It is recommended that you purchase insurance to cover tour costs, baggage, emergency and medical costs. Repatriation of remains, kidnapping and ransom are also a consideration for some.
10. **Know Your Program** – Be confident with whom you book your travel. Get references. Ask questions to ensure you understand all aspects of your travel program.