Healthy Travel Tips

Know Before You Go!
- Research your destination.
- Learn about the health conditions and diseases in the countries that you plan to visit, your own risk factors and know how to prevent illness.
- Know what resources will be available to you in the event that you do get injured or ill.

Visit Your Doctor, Dentist and Travel Health Clinic
- Visit the travel health clinic early so that required immunizations can take effect. Vaccination requirements will depend on current/past health, previous vaccination history, where you will be going and what you’ll be doing while you’re away.

What to Bring?
- Basic First Aid Kit (see example below)
- Your regular medications stored in their original containers
- If you are travelling with prescription medications, bring a copy of your original prescription(s).
- Doctor’s note explaining current illness & treatment (i.e. diabetes).
- Carry a signed doctor’s certificate with all sharps (i.e. epi-pen, insulin).
- Sexual health tool box (contraception, condoms, dental dams, lube).
- Extra contact lenses & eye glasses; and your prescription for both.
- Travel medication such as, anti-malaria medication, antibiotic for traveller’s diarrhea, high altitude sickness medications.

First Aid Kit
- Medications – analgesic, anti-diarrhea preparation, antihistamine, decongestant, fever reducer, antifungal cream, antacid, mild laxative, topical antibiotic ointment, anti-nausea/anti-motion sickness, calamine lotion
- Bandages, gauze, latex or non-latex gloves, scissors, safety pins, tweezers, tape, antiseptic, thermometer, moist towelettes
- Electrolyte replacement
- Mosquito repellent and mosquito net if travelling to a malaria zone
- Sun screen with at least SPF of 15
- Water purification

Travel Health Insurance!
- Does the plan pay up front or reimburse you?
- Does it cover illness resulting from existing conditions?
- Does it cover extreme sports?
- Does the policy have an emergency phone line to call for help anywhere in the world?
Food Safety
- Boil it, cook it, peel it, or forget it!
- Wash hands before eating and preparing food.
- Avoid tap water or ice (unless purified).
- Brush teeth with purified water.
- Bottled or canned beverages usually safe (ensure safety seal).
- Avoid unpasteurized dairy products.
- Avoid street vendors, watermelon, cold appetizers and dips.

Getting Around Safely
- Follow your “gut” feeling or “intuition”.
- Travel with a buddy.
- Know where you are going when taking public transport or a cab.
- Take a cab or bus instead of a scooter or motorcycle.
- Reduce exposure to sun.
- Wear a money belt.
- Leave valuables at home.
- Don’t pet the stray animals.
- Going out to have some fun? Use the buddy system, protect your drink and don’t accept drinks from others.

Sexual Health
- Having sex while travelling abroad increases your risk for acquiring a sexually transmitted infection (STI).
- Know the risks for acquiring STI’s.
- Use safer sex practises – condoms & dental dams.
- Understand the risks associated with body piercing and tattooing.
- What to do if the condom breaks? Is ECP available?
- Adjust your oral contraceptive pills according to the new time change; the pill should be taken every 24 hours.

Coming Home...When to See the Doctor
- Unprotected sex, fever, diarrhea, skin disorders
- When in doubt, see your doctor

Websites and Resources

Travel Medicine
www.cdc.gov/travel/
www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/tmp-pmv/

International Association for Medical Assistance to Travellers
www.iamat.org/

Canadian Traveller & Consular Affairs
www.voyage.gc.ca

SFU Health and Counselling Centre
www.sfu.ca/hccc

General Health Information
www.bchealthguide.org
http://medlineplus.gov/
www.canadian-health-network.ca

Student Health
www.students.sfu.ca/health
www.goaskalice.columbia.edu/

Sexual Health
www.optionsforsexualhealth.org
www.stdresource.com