



The Johns Hopkins Center for Global Health

Overseas Travel Handbook

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Important Information

This Handbook is intended to guide student travelers. Although the information is gathered from reliable sources, changes occur from time-to-time. The Center makes no warranty as to the reliability, accuracy, timelines, usefulness, or completeness of the information contained in the handbook.

BACKGROUND

The Center for Global Health (CGH) has developed this handbook to help prepare overseas travelers participating in Center funded experiences. This handbook has been prepared with the perspective that the reader will be traveling to a developing country. Travelers should take into account a number of administrative, health, and safety issues before leaving the country. Remember that when working overseas, even in the short-term, you need to be prepared before leaving the US in order to have a productive experience and avoid unnecessary health and safety risks. While the CGH has endeavored to include as many topics and facts as possible, this handbook may not be comprehensive.

BEFORE YOU GO...

General

Learn as much as you can about where you are going:

- The country and region, including the climate, political system, etc.
- The place you will be living and what to expect
- The organization you will be working with

Your Project

You do not want to get to your destination and discover all is not what you thought it to be with regard to your project.

1. Be sure your project is clearly defined and that your mentor's commitment to work with you is established and documented (e.g. e-mail).
2. Special attention to commitments will be needed if:
 - a. you are working on a faculty member's project but the faculty member will not be in-country, or
 - b. you will be working on the project of an overseas partner rather than a Hopkins faculty member.

You may want to establish a relationship with the person with whom you will be working during the planning period. During this process commitments can be worked out. Be sure that any support which is promised is documented.

3. If your project involves self-directed research on your part be sure that you have planned for Human Subjects approval (IRB) both in your host country and at Hopkins well in advance. Approvals by overseas IRBs may take a long time and the Hopkins IRB will not approve a project that does not have overseas approval. You cannot receive CGH funding without IRB approval of your project

Worksite and Housing

Obtain information about where you will be working:

1. Be clear about where exactly you will be working and how to get there once you are in country.
2. Clearly identify who will meet you when you arrive.

One of the most frequent problems cited by student travelers is difficulty in securing appropriate housing in country. After you have received a funding notice:

1. Identify and get in contact with someone who can help you with securing housing.
2. Setup your housing arrangements and try to get them documented.
3. Be clear about who, in-country, will assist you in getting there.

Travel Documents

- **VISAs –*Research carefully and plan in advance!*** A visa is required to enter most countries. Call or check the website of the embassy of the country you are visiting (most are

in Washington). Visas, if necessary, should be obtained well in advance of your travel. Some countries grant visas at the port of entry upon payment of the requisite visa fees. However, that means carrying extra cash and difficulties may arise if you arrive late or at busy hours. Go to the embassy yourself if you have a problem obtaining a visa. A visa may also be needed for transit through some countries even if you only change flights. A tourist visa is often all that is needed for your length of stay in country, but research the time allotted for a tourist visa to ensure it will not expire during your work stay. A business visa may permit extra time in-country and help avoid additional fees if multiple visits are required. A letter from your research site may be required with your visa application for the business visa.

Special note for International Students: if you are a non-US passport holder, pay extra attention to your planning. Policies about travel to a country may differ by citizenship of the traveler. For example, some applicants may have a lower visa cost and others may have difficulty getting a visa to cover the time needed for their work. A visit to the embassy of your target country may be helpful; check their policies about personal visits for visas. It is **very important** to visit the Office of International Student, Faculty and Staff Services at Hopkins to review your documents **before** you leave. Be sure to take your US Visa with you when you travel overseas so that you may re-enter the US without difficulty.

- **Passports** –travelers will need a passport even if traveling to Mexico, the Caribbean and certain other countries where passports had previously not been required. If you do not have a passport allow several months before your planned trip to apply for a passport; during peak application times it can take up to 10-12 weeks to receive the final document in the mail. Consider the time of year you are applying – demand for passports goes up during the spring and summer. If this is your first passport, you will need to apply in person. Facilities that process passports include many Federal, state and probate courts, post offices, some public libraries, and a number of county and municipal offices. Passport photos may be obtained quickly and inexpensively from the School of Medicine Pathology Photography & Computer Graphic Department (<http://photography.jhu.edu/> 410-955-3843). If you have a passport it must be valid for the full time that you will be away. Some countries require that your passport be valid at least six (6) months beyond the dates of your trip. Some airlines will not allow you to board if this requirement is not met. For complete details on passport rules and how to apply, visit the Department of State website (http://travel.state.gov/passport/passport_1738.html) Have a small supply of extra passport photos on hand for visas or a replacement passport, as well as a notarized photocopy of your passport (it may suffice in an emergency).
- **Airline tickets** - Ensure you have return airline tickets well in advance of your trip. Do not travel with a one-way ticket, as you may be restricted from entering the country upon arrival, and you may have difficulty securing return flight airline tickets while away.
- **Copies of Documents** - Make a copy of your passport, visa, airline tickets and other important travel documents; leave copies with someone you can contact so they can fax them to an embassy if everything you own is stolen.

Contact People

Before you leave, identify people and organizations that might be helpful to you in case a difficulty arises while you are away. The following will be most important:

- **The U.S. Embassy in the country you are visiting.** Go to the US State Department website (<http://www.usembassy.gov/>) for this information. Take the Embassy’s in-country number with you.
- **International SOS.** This service is automatically available to Hopkins faculty, staff, and students under a central subscription by the university. ISOS provides international medical, security and travel assistance while on university-related business including your travel experience. These services include coordination of medical care and evacuation. **Note that these services aren’t necessarily free of cost to you.** You aren’t charged for coordination costs but if they buy you an airline ticket, Hopkins will be billed, and they’ll come looking to you or your insurance for reimbursement. **Please also note that ISOS does not cover you while on personal travel overseas.** To obtain your ISOS “card,” go to the Hopkins purchasing website (http://www.jhu.edu/purchasing/travel/intl_sos.pdf). The “card” provides emergency contact numbers. Once you get your card you should visit the ISOS website for additional details (<http://www.internationalsos.com>). Note that you should use the membership number from the card to log into the Hopkins pages of ISOS to get specific information.
- **Site Supervisor/Mentor.** Most students will be working with an established project when they travel. Obtain and record the in-country phone number for the supervisor/mentor prior to departure in case of a difficulty after arriving in country.

Registration of Travel

It is important that you can be located you in case of an emergency. This will be accomplished by registering your travel with the Johns Hopkins International Travel Registry (JHITR). If you are funded by the Center for Global Health your trip will be added to the registry. However, you will need to add profile information and your itinerary. You will be prompted to do this. You may, however, get a head start on your “Traveler Profile” by going to the JHITR at: <https://travelregistry.johnshopkins.edu/Travel> Please note that the information you provide will only be seen by people at Hopkins and International SOS and will be used to assist you in the event of an emergency. This information will not be shared with any other organization. When your itinerary is complete you will have an opportunity to print it. It is recommended that you give a copy to your emergency contact.

If you are a US citizen you may also **Register at the U.S. Embassy or Consulate** (in the country you are visiting) also makes your presence and whereabouts known, in case it is necessary for a consular officer to contact you in an emergency. To register, go to the State Department website (<https://step.state.gov/step/>). Registration with the State Department is not a requirement but does not conflict with registration with JHU through ISOS.

Health

Make plans to safeguard your health and safety. Travel to a developing country may mean exposure to diseases not encountered at home or are far less prevalent. Attention to prevention is key, and vigilance about symptoms consistent with these diseases is important.

- **Vaccines** - for your own health, make sure you have the necessary vaccines for the country you are visiting. Certain vaccines may also be required to enter the country.
 - If you have a vaccine record, bring it with you when you get your vaccines.
 - Boosters of vaccines that are required in the US (e.g. tetanus, measles, polio) may be needed

- Obtain and read vaccine recommendations targeted to the countries in which you will be traveling (See the CDC's site <http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/content/vaccinations.aspx> and the section "**Get Additional Information**")
 - Vaccinations that are often needed may include Hepatitis A, Hepatitis B (especially if you are sexually active or work with biologic samples or blood), Typhoid fever, meningococcal disease, and yellow fever. *Note:* entry into some countries requires a yellow fever vaccination, which must be recorded on a yellow form provided by the WHO. In some countries in Africa, if you arrive without the yellow fever vaccination card, you will be vaccinated upon entry, which carries some risk of contamination with unsterile equipment.
 - Many vaccinations require a series of injections or oral doses, so plan ahead to assure that you are properly vaccinated. This should be one of your first actions.
 - **Note: The student health plan offered by the University may cover the cost of routine immunizations but probably will not cover the cost of other. This may also apply to personal insurance coverage. These costs are a legitimate use of your travel award.**
- **Other preventive measures.**
 - Obtain and read prevention information targeted to the countries in which you will be traveling (See: "**Get Additional Information**" further on this page)
 - Obtain and read general tips on eating and drinking (**See Appendix A**).
 - **Malaria.** Secure a prescription for malaria prophylaxis medications if traveling to areas with endemic malaria. One of the most serious health risks you may face is malaria, and it can be lethal. Be sure you understand when and how to take the medication and what to do to protect yourself in the event you develop a side effect to your medication.
 - Carry a supply of an antibiotic for traveler's diarrhea; ask your doctor about this.
 - Obtain clear information about the symptoms of serious diseases and what to do in the event of an illness
 - **Sunburn** is a potential hazard if your project will require you to be in the sun. Take sun block with you since it is possible that, in some rural areas, it may not be available.
 - Try to determine ahead of time whether you will have regular access to potable water. If not, consider bringing water purification supplies, e.g., iodine tablets, water filter kits, and UV lights – all of which are available in outdoor stores.
 - **Get a Pre-Travel Medical Consultation** A worthwhile use of part of your travel funding is a visit to a travelers' medical clinic. During a consultation, you should be provided with information about needed vaccines and preventive measures targeted to the country you are visiting. A travel clinic will also help with medications you may need. Although there are many traveler's clinics available (See International Society of Travel Medicine - <http://www.istm.org>) one of the best is located here at Hopkins. The clinic is operated by clinicians with extensive experience in travel medicine and tropical diseases and is located in the basement at the Bloomberg School of Public Health. Vaccinations, prescriptions for prophylactic medications, and health information targeted to your travel needs are provided. For more information and or an appointment call 410-955-8931 or visit their website (<http://www.hopkinsglobalhealth.org/resources/clinic-information/>). Travelers' clinics are uniquely positioned to administer the vaccines that you need, many of which are not available through your personal medical provider.
 - **Get Additional Information**
Obtain additional information about health issues beyond what is provided by the travelers' clinic. The CDC travel website (<http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/>) has comprehensive information

and is usually the source to which most people refer. The International SOS website (<http://www.internationalsos.com>) also has helpful health information.

- **Examine and Verify Your Health Insurance Coverage**
 - Before you leave, check to be sure that your health insurance will cover you when you are overseas; there is great variety in coverage among personal plans.
 - If you are not comfortable with your current level of coverage, look into supplemental travel insurance.
 - Consider calling your provider to inform them that you will be traveling overseas. Learn about how to reach a representative while you are abroad and how to submit claims for any care received and paid.
 - Some health plans (e.g. BCBS) have arrangements with physicians overseas where billing is done by the provider. However, these providers may not be near you while you are in-country and you will have to seek reimbursement. Most programs require you to submit claims for reimbursement. The EHP student plan will reimburse you for medical expenses you may incur while overseas but you will need to gather detailed information about your illness, treatments provided, and cost in order to submit a claim. This includes:
 - full name of the patient;
 - date(s) the services, drugs or supplies were received;
 - the diagnosis;
 - a description of the treatment received;
 - charge for each service, drug or supply;
 - name, address and professional status of the provider.
 - Billing and other information may need to be translated if not in English. Unless the documentation is in a commonly spoken language in the US, it may be worth having the translation done while you are in-country where the availability of a translator is more likely.
 - Full-time graduate students have the option to subscribe to health insurance through EHP. Please note that while the policy covers them when traveling overseas, “the student health plan does not cover injury or disease resulting from war, acts of war, terrorism, riot, rebellion, civil disobediences, or from military services in any country.” This is an additional incentive to steer clear of demonstrations and other large gatherings while in-country.
 - Although your medical insurance policy is not likely to cover medical evacuation, International SOS should be able to help if you have an emergency that requires you to be evacuated.

- **Have a Dental Checkup**

If you will be overseas for an extended time, be sure to have a dental check up prior to leaving. You should avoid dental care in many developing countries

- **Organize Your Medications**
 - Carry an adequate supply of required medicines, including prescriptions and over-the-counter medicines with you. You may not be able to get them while traveling.
 - To avoid problems when passing through customs, keep medicines in their original, labeled containers.
 - Bring copies of your prescriptions and the generic names for the drugs. If a medication is unusual or contains narcotics, carry a letter from your doctor attesting to your need to take the drug. **Note:** some medications that are legally prescribed in the US are illegal in

other countries. If you have any doubt about the legality of carrying a certain drug into a country, consult the embassy or consulate of that country before you travel.

- If you are diabetic and need to take insulin, you should plan your trip carefully as refrigeration may not be readily available. Plan on taking an adequate supply of needles for your trip as well as having a letter from a physician attesting to your need to use needles. To be sure you will have no difficulty you may want to verify policies with the embassy of the country you will be visiting. Also, the Transportation Security Administration asks that you declare such items.

- **Glasses**

Glasses are like medications. If you need them, make sure you take an extra pair as it may be difficult to get a replacement pair in-country. If you do not have an extra pair, consider having another pair made or at least bring a copy of the prescription with you.

- **Complete the Center for Global Health Personal Health Checklist.** This checklist is provided to assist you in case the information is needed. (See attached forms at the end of the handbook. **Note:** a “fillable” version of the form is on the CGH website) The sheet keeps important information together and documented so that you do not have to search for it. Additionally, if you are incapacitated the information could be used by in-country medical providers.

A Special Health Note

Students traveling to developing countries should be aware that attitudes toward, accommodation for, and treatment of medical conditions, disabilities, and psychological conditions vary by culture and under the laws of the host countries. These cultural and legal differences impact the level of treatment and accommodation available abroad. Students should give serious consideration to their health and personal circumstances when accepting a place in a program. For example, people with physical disabilities may not be able to get around easily and emergency care for psychological conditions may not be readily available.

Crime and Safety Issues

- **Learn About Crime and Safety**

The Department of State's Country Specific Information sheets are available for every country of the world (<http://www.state.gov/misc/list/index.htm> follow the links to “Background Notes”) They describe entry requirements, currency regulations, unusual health conditions, the crime and security situation, political disturbances, areas of instability, and special information about driving and road conditions. They also provide addresses and emergency telephone numbers for U.S. embassies and consulates. In general, Country Specific Information sheets do not give advice. Instead, they describe conditions so travelers can make informed decisions about their trips.

For some countries, however, the Department of State issues a Travel Warning in addition to a Country Specific Information. The Travel Warning may recommend that Americans defer travel to that country because of a dangerous situation there. Generally, Hopkins will not support the travel of students to countries under a travel warning. Travel Alerts are a means to disseminate information about relatively short-term conditions posing significant risk to the security of American travelers. They are issued when there is a perceived threat, even if it does not involve Americans as a particular target group. In the past, Travel Alerts

have been issued to deal with coups, pre-election disturbances, violence by terrorists, and anniversary dates of specific terrorist events.

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>

Subsistence and Financial Issues

▪ **Learn About and Set Up Your Lodging Arrangements**

Do this in advance if at all possible or at least know where you might be able to stay. Recommendations from people on the ground or who have been where you are going are very valuable. Knowing what to expect in terms of the facility will be important to you in preparing for your visit.

▪ **Learn About Money and Banking Before You Go**

Try to use your contacts to ascertain how much your trip will cost. It will be important to determine how you will maintain a cash flow. Generally, keeping a large amount of cash with you is not recommended. On the other hand, access to ATMs varies greatly from country-to-country and in some cases may only be available in larger cities.

The following links may be helpful:

MasterCard ATM Locator:

<http://www.mastercard.com/us/personal/en/cardholderservices/atmlocations/index.html>

Visa ATM Locator: <http://visa.via.infonow.net/locator/global>

Traveler's checks may be accepted at banks and destinations in cities but perhaps not in rural areas. Be sure you will be able to have access to money when you need it. If you elect to take some US currency in large denominations it may be helpful to get new or relatively new bills. In some countries banks had been concerned about the ability to rule out counterfeit bills among older bills and were refusing to exchange any old bills.

Before you go, get a money belt to secure your currency. Also, before you go consider how you will secure your valuables while in-country.

Also equally important is that travelers be aware of how much banks charge for international withdrawals. Specifically, what is the exchange rate and what percentage of each withdrawal do they take as a fee? Travelers have reported that certain banks take a sizeable fraction of each withdrawal made from foreign ATMs

• **Credit Cards**

Make copies of the credit cards you are taking with you and leaving the copies with someone you trust in the event your card is stolen; that way you can contact the credit card provider. Contact banks and credit card companies to alert them of your travel because often the bank will hold/cancel your card as soon as it sees foreign activity.

Other issues

• **Cultural Assimilation and Related Issues**

○ Learn about the country you are visiting, people and their culture and customs, maybe even learn a few words of the language. Travelers report that people in other countries appreciate even a small effort to be polite in their native language. In a country where English is not widely spoken learning basic phrases (such as hello, goodbye, thank you, where is the toilet? and my name is...) will make life easier. The Culture Crossing

website: <http://www.culturecrossing.net/> may provide helpful information. (The accuracy of the information on this website has not been verified.)

- Try to learn in advance important “dos” and “don’ts” for the country you are traveling to. For example, politics can be a very touchy issue and recognize that not every country affords the same level of freedom of expression that we enjoy.
- Consider bringing pictures of your family and postcards of your home town with you and showing-and-telling of your life back home does a lot to break down cultural barriers, and build friendships and cultural understanding. It’s something we don’t often think of, but may make a huge difference.
- Small gifts from America for homestay families, in-country mentors, or new friends are also always useful and don’t take up much luggage space.

- **Communications/Computer**

Investigate before you leave how you will communicate with those back home and whether you should consider bringing a cell phone for your trip. Calling cards and similar schemes may be available in-country and it might be worth learning ahead of time the best bets on these. Cell phone service is available in most developing countries. The costs of calling within country can be reasonable. However, many cell phones operating in the US will not work in Europe and Africa, for example. Some newer phones can accept a SIM card for calling in-country but must be “unlocked” from your current service provider’s system. This is something that they may not wish to do. For more on unlocked phones see this article from PC Magazine:

http://www.pcworld.com/article/135768/joys_of_unlocked_cell_phones.html If you don’t have an appropriate phone, it is possible to buy or rent a basic phone for a reasonable fee; try to do your homework ahead of time.

Weigh the benefit of taking your laptop against the potential for theft and availability of internet service. Internet service in some countries is spotty; big cities tend to have more service than rural areas. You should be prepared to pay for internet services.

Food for thought from a previous traveler to East Africa:

Bring a laptop. Your host organization may have courtesy USB 3G modems to loan, otherwise they are not too expensive.

- **Electrical**

Avoid bringing unnecessary electrical devices. Buy plug adaptors and current converters in the U.S. as they can be difficult to find abroad. Check to see if any of the electrical equipment you wish to bring will operate on 220/240 volt current. Many laptops and telephones will operate/charge on 220/240 V circuits and all you will need is a plug adaptor. If you do not know what service is available at your destination visit https://www.voltagevalet.com/elec_guide.html for assistance.

- **Packing**

- Review TSA rules in preparation for your trip (<http://www.tsa.gov/traveler-information>) In particular, pay attention to the ever-changing rules for the contents of carry-on cases.
- A carry-on bag that is comfortable to hold for long periods of time (something that is ergonomic) would be a good purchase for travelers who will need to carry research materials with themselves while “in the field.” Also, if your baggage is lost in transit then having a carry-on with some necessary items is a good idea in case of emergency.

PRE-TRAVEL ACTION ITEMS

- Verify or obtain passport
- Obtain Visa
- Make copies of your passport and visa – **GIVE A COPY TO YOUR FAMILY OR TRUSTED FRIEND BEFORE YOU TRAVEL**
- Schedule medical consultation/vaccine administration **early**
- Complete the Center for Global Health Personal Health Checklist. – **GIVE A COPY TO YOUR FAMILY OR TRUSTED FRIEND BEFORE YOU TRAVEL**
- Register your travel (**REQUIRED for CGH grantees**)
- Verify Your Health Insurance
- Learn about health and disease prevention measures for your travel
- Learn about crime and safety for your travel
- Learn about and plan for your lodging and subsistence including cash flow matters
- Organize your medical/health supplies and needs

WHILE TRAVELING OR AT YOUR DESTINATION...

General

When you arrive at your destination supplement your knowledge about your surroundings, where you will be staying and working. Get advice and information from people who you will be working with and others you can trust. Ask your hotel or colleagues upon arrival about common local scams and distraction techniques. Be sure to have a conversation with your in-country hosts about safety and crime and try to develop a communication and action plan in case of an emergency.

Stay in Touch

While away stay in contact with your family and mentor back in the US. Not only will this be appreciated, but staying in touch also assures people that you are safe. Non-communication may correctly or incorrectly be interpreted to mean that you are in trouble.

In the Event of Emergency

If you become seriously ill, injured, or become a victim of crime, you should work with your in-country contacts to secure assistance for your immediate needs. International SOS should also be contacted to report the emergency and to determine if additional resources are necessary. ISOS contact numbers are located in the Emergency Contact Information Sheet.

Health Issues

- **Mosquito precautions** – Mosquitoes are important vectors of serious illness in the developing world. Following mosquito precautions is advisable in areas where malaria, dengue, and other mosquito born infections are prevalent. Precautions include the application of repellants and use of bed nets (**See Appendix B**).
- **Malaria** – If you are in an area where malaria is prevalent you should have been prescribed prophylactic medication. Take such medications as recommended, and take the full course – which usually requires that you take them for a specified time upon your return. If you get a high fever, severe headache, or flu-like symptoms while in a malaria zone be sure to go to the doctor immediately, as this can be a sign of malaria. Prompt treatment is imperative to avoid serious health consequences.
- **Foodborne diseases** – Get vaccinated against Hepatitis A and watch what you eat and drink to avoid food-borne contamination. Review Appendix A and other sources (e.g. the CDC website) to get advice on how to avoid food- and drink-borne infections. You may have been given a supply of an antibiotic (such as ciprofloxacin) by your travel doctor before you left home. Be sure to get instructions on when to take these, as well as how to take them.
- **Dehydration** - In dry climates and in higher elevations dehydration can occur, and its effects can be serious. Symptoms include dry mouth, cessation of tear production, cessation of sweating, muscle cramps, nausea and vomiting, heart palpitations, and lightheadedness (especially when standing). If you are traveling to an arid area of the world, especially at a higher elevation, make sure that you identify a safe source of drinking water. Drink frequently and don't wait for thirst as a cue. It is difficult to obtain a good estimate of fluid requirements but a good rule of thumb: if you do not urinate or pass dark urine infrequently, you need to drink more.
- **HIV and Sexually Transmitted Diseases** - It is very important that you take extreme care to avoid a sexually transmitted infection, including HIV. If you will be sexually active you should use a condom for all sexual contact – oral, vaginal, or anal. You may want to carry condoms with you as a source of condoms may be difficult to find. Take care that the condoms are stored correctly (not in heat) and that they are not expired. The best way to

avoid a sexually transmitted disease is to avoid sexual contact. Avoid injections, dental procedures or skin piercing while traveling to prevent HIV and Hepatitis.

- **Other Infectious Diseases** – Follow guidelines about any other diseases that might be prevalent in the area in which you are traveling. For example, swimming or wading in fresh water in African countries may place you at risk of schistosomiasis.
- **Self help.** Carry a first aid kit. If an accident does occur, seek medical care quickly. If you wait too long you risk serious health consequences. It is suggested that you read “**Where There Is No Doctor: A Village Health Care Handbook**” (David Werner, Hesperian Society, May 2009; available at Amazon.com) before you travel. This is an excellent resource on travel health issues for developing countries. It is especially important that you avoid unsterile needles and syringes. In many cases you can request to purchase a new needle or syringe, or have someone with you do so.
- **Health Care** International SOS and the US Embassy maintain a list of medical providers in most countries. If you need medical care, you should contact ISOS. You should also get word back to your advisor and family if an accident occurs. Try to have an advocate with you any time you receive medical care. A health care provider who will see to your best interests, a traveling companion or, at a minimum, someone who speaks the local language, can serve as a valuable ally in an emergency.

Crime and Safety Issues

- **Accidents/injuries** – This is probably the most likely health risk that you face, especially traffic accidents.
 - Do not drive a vehicle while on your trip.
 - Do not ride on bicycles or motorcycles, including motorcycle taxis.
 - Do not travel at night.
 - When you travel by car, use a seatbelt (even if others do not), and tell the driver to slow down if you feel unsafe. It is always much better to risk social embarrassment to avoid an accident, so do not be shy about asserting your desire to have a driver go more slowly. You may want to establish a maximum driving speed before you depart. You should also tell the driver to avoid passing (overtaking) if you feel that he/she is being unsafe.
- **Crime** is a serious problem for persons traveling.
 - Out and About
 - Do not carry or display large amount of cash when traveling. Use a money belt to store your money and valuables.
 - Store valuables (including your airline tickets, credit cards, money, passport, and travelers checks) in the hotel safe, or other secure location if a safe is not available.
 - Check with your local collaborators about risky situations and areas to avoid.
 - If you are robbed do not resist – give them your money and valuables. It is always better to replace them then risk physical harm. Report such events to the police immediately.
 - Make a photocopy of your passport and store it separate from your passport. This can be very helpful if you lose your passport. If you need to keep identification on you, use the photocopy of the passport with your driver’s license. It is also helpful to make photocopies of your credit cards, passport, and travelers check receipts and leave them with someone you can contact back home. This will facilitate replacement if they are lost or stolen.
 - Prepare your routes before setting out. Avoid studying your map in the street; you will be broadcasting the fact that you don’t know where you are.
 - Lock your room before setting out.

- Don't wear expensive clothing or jewelry or carry expensive cameras. Carry your laptop only if you must.
- Avoid clothing that declares your nationality or political beliefs.
- Do not allow anyone you don't know to lead you to a deserted area or away from a public place.
- Avoid alleys, poorly-lit streets, walking alone at night, lonely beaches, and crossing bridges on foot at night (thieves can hide under bridges and then trap you in the middle of the bridge). Beware of pickpockets, especially in crowded stations, busy streets, or market places. Velcro pockets are a good deterrent.
- Distribute your cash about your person. Don't keep it all in your wallet or purse or one pocket. Use a money belt. Keep a small amount of cash in your pocket for easy access and keep the rest concealed.
- Keep one hand free to protect yourself and your valuables. Specific targets for thieves are shoulder bags, outside pouches of backpacks, and cameras that hang from straps. Wear them under a jacket or shirt so they are less accessible to thieves. Do not hand your luggage or personal belongings to anyone you cannot directly supervise or observe.
- Avoid being intoxicated at night on the street. Use a taxi, but make sure it is an official taxi and note the license plate as you enter the vehicle.
- Be aware of your surroundings at all times. Know where you are, what is happening and who is around you. If you are lost, don't show it.
- Familiarize yourself with your neighborhood. Locate the nearest police station, hospital, or clinic, shops and restaurants.
- Get to know your neighbors. They may be able to help you in an emergency.
- During periods of civil unrest, stay home. If you have to go out, use common sense. Avoid large crowds and getting into arguments, especially with soldiers, police or anyone carrying weapons.
- During periods when there is a higher-than-normal risk of violence against American citizens and US interests, you should also:
 - Keep a low profile; avoid areas where foreigners are known to congregate (e.g., hotels, restaurants, public markets, shopping malls, and clubs), especially during peak hours.
 - Be cautious about providing personal information (e.g., name, address, place of business) to unknown persons.
 - Be unpredictable:
 - Vary your travel routes.
 - Vary your times of departure. Allow a minimum of a one-hour departure window.
 - Do not keep routine, standing appointments.
 - Change transportation.

Public Transportation

- Use only "registered" taxis, preferably radio taxis if at all possible recognizing that there may be a price differential.
- Negotiate the fee before entering the taxi.
- When using taxis, pay the driver after you get out of the vehicle.
- Carry money in small denominations at all times, so you have change for the taxi bill and don't need a large note where you may not receive change.
- Avoid sharing taxis with unknown passengers.
- Avoid overcrowded public transportation, when possible.
- Don't accept food offerings; they may contain sedatives to induce sleep and allow you to be robbed.

- Keep your luggage locked and in your view at all times.
- Beware of false porters who may disappear with your luggage.

In your hotel or accommodation

- Look for fire safety instructions in your hotel room. Familiarize yourself with escape routes upon arrival so you are prepared to find it in poor visibility.
- Keep your hotel door locked at all times. Always sleep in locked and secured accommodations. Meet visitors in the lobby.
- Don't advertise your room number. When out of the hotel, one option is to leave your key with the concierge.
- Keep valuables in the hotel safe. Room safes are less secure.
- Inform someone, including the front desk, when you expect to return if you will be out late at night.

▪ Mixing with People

- You will establish relationships with the people involved in your project. Use these people to help expand your meetings with other people in your host country. Be cautious of strangers who engage you for socializing or purchases.
- Understand the cultural context of relationships. This is especially important in exchanges between men and women. In some countries, outgoing friendliness by women toward men which is routine here at home may be misinterpreted, resulting in a safety threat.

▪ **Terrorism and Civil Conflict**

- Check with the State Department before you leave home to learn about any safety threats in the country you are traveling to, and when possible, review travel alerts for your country
- Avoid situations, especially those contained in alerts that might place you at risk, e.g. political protests. Remember, your health and accident insurance may not cover you if you are injured in a riot.
- If you have any problems you should contact the Embassy. This includes for problems with health, safety, or civil conflict. You should also contact your advisor and family if you have any problems.
- Use common sense in your dealings, and avoid association with persons who may place you at risk, or cause you to be a target for terrorism or police harassment.

Personal Behavior

▪ **Drugs and Alcohol**

- Drug possession and use is a serious violation of the law in many countries. To avoid criminal and health/safety issues do not use drugs and avoid those that do.
- Limit your alcohol consumption. As with many customs, cross-cultural differences exist with regard to the consumption of alcohol. Keep in mind that being under the influence of alcohol impairs judgment and increases your chances of being the victim of a crime. In addition, drunken behavior discredits you, the University, and your in-country colleagues and mentors.

▪ **Sexual Activity**

- Depending upon the country you visit, sexual activity between visitors and citizens may be viewed negatively
- In some parts of the world sexual activity carries an increased risk of illness. The risk of HIV acquisition in many underdeveloped countries is many times higher than at home

▪ **Driving in a Developing Country – DON'T!**

WHEN YOU RETURN...

Health Issues

- **Malaria** – If you traveled to an area where malaria is prevalent and you were prescribed prophylactic medication, make sure you take the full course – which usually requires that you take them for specified time upon your return. If you get a high fever, severe headache, or flu-like symptoms upon return from a malaria zone, be sure to go to the doctor immediately, as this can be a sign of malaria. Prompt treatment is imperative to avoid serious health consequences.
- Even if you were not in a malaria endemic area recognize that the symptoms of other diseases may not appear until you have returned home. Severe symptoms including a high fever warrant evaluation by a medical provider. In the event you seek a medical consultation for such symptoms, make sure that you inform your provider where and when you traveled.

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FORMS AND CHECKLISTS

Center for Global Health Personal Health Checklist

*This form must be completed by the person who is traveling and a copy should be brought along on the trip and a copy left with your emergency contact person. **This is your personal information that need not be shared unless you have a medical emergency.***

Name: _____ Date of Birth: _____ Age: _____

Social Security#: _____ Passport #: _____

Home Address (city, state, zip): _____

Phone: _____ E-Mail Address: _____

Emergency Contact (e.g, parent, spouse)

Name: _____ Relationship: _____

Phone: _____ Alternate Phone: _____ E-Mail address: _____

Personal Physician (Who may be consulted on your health care in case of emergency)

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Travel and Evacuation Insurance Information

All Johns Hopkins students, faculty and staff are covered by International SOS for emergency evacuations, etc while on university sponsored travel. Contacts for this are:

If calling from:	Call Alarm Center in:	At this number:
U.S. or Canada	Philadelphia, PA	1-800-523-6586 Call collect: 1-215-942-8226
Mexico	Philadelphia, PA	Call collect: 00-215-942-8226
South and Central America	Philadelphia, PA	Call collect: 00-1-215-942-8226
Europe, CIS, Africa or the Middle East	London	Call collect: 44-208-762-8008
Asia, Australia, or the Pacific Rim	Singapore	Call collect: 65-6338-7800

*Be sure to know the country's outbound international dialing code before travel to that country.

Travelers must have a medical care plan that covers them when s/he is out of the country

Carrier or Plan Name: _____ Carrier address: _____

Name of Insured: _____ Insurance ID number: _____

Carrier Phone Number (From Overseas) _____

Carrier Phone Number (From US) _____

Medical Information

Allergies: (Describe Reaction and management of the reaction. Attach additional sheets if needed)

Medication Allergies: _____

Food Allergies: _____

Other Allergies: (insect stings, hay fever, plants, animals, dust, etc.) _____

Medications Currently Taking: Please list all medications (including over-the-counter or non-prescription drugs) taken routinely or in case of emergency. Bring enough medication to last the entire trip. Keep medications in the original packaging/bottle that identifies the prescribing physician, the name of the medication, dosage, frequency of administration.

I do not take any medication on a routine basis OR

I take the following medications: (include birth control and all things that are taken on an as needed basis as well e.g. Epinephrine for allergic reactions, asthma inhalers... add additional pages as needed) **INCLUDE MALARIA PROPHYLAXIS IF PRESCRIBED**

Med #1 _____ Dosage _____ Times each day _____ Reason _____

Med #2 _____ Dosage _____ Times each day _____ Reason _____

Med #3 _____ Dosage _____ Times each day _____ Reason _____

Eyewear: If you wear glasses or contact lenses, make sure you have an extra pair and sufficient contact solution, etc. Contact lenses are often problematic due to weather conditions, dust, and poor sanitation. This can make it difficult to keep contact lenses clean and increase the risk of eye infections. Bring a good pair of sunglasses.

Current/Past Health History:

Have you had a recent injury, illness or infectious disease? No Yes

Do you have diabetes? No Yes Treatment: _____

Do you have asthma? No Yes Treatment: _____

Ever had seizures? No Yes Treatment _____

Do you have any psychiatric conditions that may require treatment? No Yes

Any other Health issue someone should be aware of in an emergency? (Use additional Sheets if needed)

What is your blood type? _____

Tuberculosis Screening

Most Recent TB PPD Skin Test: Date _____ Size (mm) _____ Result _____

(PPD test should be placed within two years prior to travel and repeated 3 months after return.)

If you have had a positive PPD Skin Test in the past, date of your most recent Chest X-ray and result: _____

Have you taken treatment for latent TB infection? When? (date) _____

Vaccinations – Be sure to have your Yellow Vaccination record with you.

Center for Global Health
Personal Health Checklist – Continuation Sheet

Use this page to provide additional information that may be needed in case of emergency.

Medications Currently Taking

Med #4	_____	Dosage	_____	Times each day	_____	Reason	_____
Med #5	_____	Dosage	_____	Times each day	_____	Reason	_____
Med #6	_____	Dosage	_____	Times each day	_____	Reason	_____
Med #7	_____	Dosage	_____	Times each day	_____	Reason	_____
Med #8	_____	Dosage	_____	Times each day	_____	Reason	_____
Med #9	_____	Dosage	_____	Times each day	_____	Reason	_____

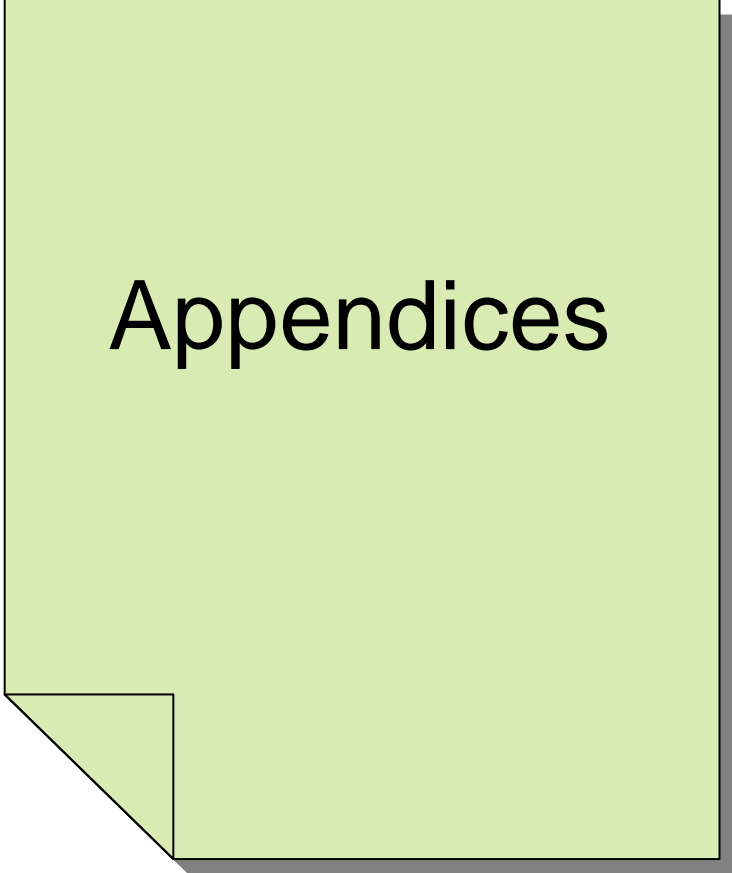
Additional Medical Information:

Center for Global Health International Travel Checklist

This check list is meant to serve as a guide for students traveling to developing countries

Depending on your destination, you may want to keep a supply of items that may not be readily available locally.

Item	Packed
Essentials	
Passport/Visa	
Health Insurance information/forms	
Foreign Currency	
Airline/Other transportation Tickets	
Reservation Information	
Travel Itinerary	
Emergency Contact Card	
Electrical adaptors	
Health-Related Items	
Vaccination record (yellow card)	
Insect repellent	
Mosquito netting	
Water purification (iodine, chlorine, filter)	
Medicines	
Birth control/condoms	
Laxatives	
Spare glasses, sunglasses, contact lenses, solutions, etc.	
Sunscreen	
Feminine hygiene products	
Antiseptic hand wipes	
Tissues (travel pack)	
Analgesics	
Decongestant, cold medicine, cough suppressant	
Personal re-usable water bottle	
First Aid Kit	
Adhesive bandages (or gauze with tape)	
Alcohol swabs	
Antiseptic (e.g. povidone-iodine)	
Bandage rolls (for sprains, etc.)	
Scissors (checked baggage)	
Thermometer	
Tweezers	
Antibiotic/antifungal/hydrocortisone creams	
Pepto-Bismol tablets, antacid	
General Items	
Camera with film, batteries	
Candle and matches	
Detergent (to wash items in hotel)	
Ear Plugs	
Electrical plug adaptor/voltage transformer (entire kit as standards may vary)	
Flashlight and batteries or crank-up flashlight	
Money Belt	
Neck Pillow (inflatable)	
Plastic baggies (large for laundry and small for liquid bottles)	
Sewing kits	
General purpose cleaner or soap (small bar)	
Travel alarm clock	
Washcloth – often not found abroad	



Appendices

Appendix A

Avoid Enteric Illness

Before Travel:

- Get vaccinated for Hepatitis A

During Travel

- It is difficult, if not impossible, to guarantee the safety of food and beverages when traveling, especially in developing countries.
- Without strict public health standards, bacteria or parasites in food or water may go undetected and cause illness such as traveler's diarrhea. Be sure to follow food and water precautions and concentrate on eating the types of food that tend to be safest.
- Traveler's diarrhea is caused by something the traveler ate or drank. While it may not be possible to avoid diarrhea in certain high-risk destinations, even with the strictest adherence to preventive measures, the risk can be minimized by following basic guidelines:

FOOD

Travelers SHOULD:

- Eat at establishments that are known to cater to foreigners or that are specifically known by other foreigners to be safe.
- Eat foods that are well-cooked and served steaming hot.
- Eat breads, tortillas, crackers, biscuits, and other baked goods.
- Eat fruits, nuts, and vegetables with thick skins, peels, or shells that you remove yourself.
- Eat canned foods.
- Always wash your hands with soap before eating and after using the toilet.

Travelers SHOULD NOT:

- Eat any food from street vendors or market stalls.
- Eat leafy or uncooked vegetables and salads.
- Eat undercooked, raw or cold meat, seafood, and fish.
- Eat large carnivorous fish, especially from reef areas. Many contain concentrated toxins.
- Eat or drink unpasteurized dairy products such as cheese, yogurt, and milk. Be particularly wary of ice cream and other frozen confections that may have been made or stored in contaminated containers.
- Eat cold sauces such as mayonnaise, salad dressing, chutneys, or salsas, which are usually raw and made by hand.
- Eat buffet foods such as lasagna, casseroles, and stews unless you know they are fresh (not reheated) and have been kept steaming hot. Avoid buffets where there are no food covers or fly controls.
- Eat creamy desserts, custards, or sauces that may not have been adequately refrigerated.

WATER AND BEVERAGES

- Tap Water: Developing countries do not always have the resources needed to ensure a pure water supply, and consequently tap water is often not safe to drink.
- Even if the people who live there can drink the water, travelers should not assume that they can. Local residents have built up immunity to organisms in the water, but visitors have not. As a result, tap water can make visitors sick.

- When traveling through areas with less than adequate sanitation or with water sources of unknown purity, travelers can reduce the chance of illness by following these precautions:

Travelers **SHOULD**:

- Use sealed (name brand, if possible) bottled water or chemically treated (iodine), filtered, or boiled water for drinking and for brushing teeth.
- Drink beverages made only with boiled water whenever possible (such as hot tea and coffee). Water boiled for any length of time (even 1 minute), at any altitude, is safe to drink.
- Drink canned, boxed, or commercially bottled carbonated water and drinks. International brands are safest. Beware of unsealed containers that may have been re-filled.

Travelers **SHOULD NOT**:

- Drink tap water.
- Drink water sold in sachets (plastic bags) (common primarily in West Africa)
- Rinse toothbrush in tap water.
- Use ice unless it is made from boiled, bottled, or purified water. Freezing does not kill the organisms that cause diarrhea.
- Assume that water is safe because it is chlorinated. Chlorination does not destroy all the organisms that can make you ill.
- Drink from wet cans or bottles-the water on them may be contaminated. Dry wet cans/bottles before opening and clean all surfaces that will have contact with the mouth.
- Drink fruit juice unless it comes directly from a sealed container; otherwise it may have been diluted with tap water.

Appendix B

Protection Against Mosquitoes, Ticks, and Other Insects and Arthropods

(Extracted from the CDC's Travelers' Health - Yellow Book. For complete information including repellent efficacy, use of repellents with sunscreen, etc see the CDC website:

<http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/yellowbook/2010/chapter-2/protection-against-mosquitoes-ticks-insects-arthropods.aspx>)

General Protective Measures

- **Avoid outbreaks:** To the extent possible, travelers should avoid known foci of epidemic disease transmission. The CDC Travelers' Health webpage provides alerts and information on regional disease transmission patterns and outbreak alerts (www.cdc.gov/travel).
- **Be aware of peak exposure times and places:** Exposure to arthropod bites may be reduced if travelers modify their patterns of activity or behavior. Although mosquitoes may bite at any time of day, peak biting activity for vectors of some diseases (e.g., dengue, chikungunya) is during daylight hours. Vectors of other diseases (e.g., malaria) are most active in twilight periods (i.e., dawn and dusk) or in the evening after dark. Avoiding the outdoors or focusing preventive actions during peak hours may reduce risk. Place also matters; ticks are often found in grasses and other vegetated areas. Local health officials or guides may be able to point out areas with greater arthropod activity.
- **Wear appropriate clothing:** Travelers can minimize areas of exposed skin by wearing long-sleeved shirts, long pants, boots, and hats. Tucking in shirts and wearing socks and closed shoes instead of sandals may reduce risk. Repellents or insecticides such as permethrin can be applied to clothing and gear for added protection; this measure is discussed in detail below.
- **Check for ticks:** Travelers should be advised to inspect themselves and their clothing for ticks during outdoor activity and at the end of the day. Prompt removal of attached ticks can prevent some infections.
- **Bed nets:** When accommodations are not adequately screened or air conditioned, bed nets are essential to provide protection and to reduce discomfort caused by biting insects. If bed nets do not reach the floor, they should be tucked under mattresses. Bed nets are most effective when they are treated with an insecticide or repellent such as permethrin. Pretreated, long-lasting bed nets can be purchased prior to traveling, or nets can be treated after purchase. The permethrin will be effective for several months if the bed net is not washed. (Long-lasting pretreated nets may be effective for much longer.)
- **Insecticides:** Aerosol insecticides, vaporizing mats and mosquito coils can help to clear rooms or areas of mosquitoes; however, some products available internationally may contain pesticides that are not registered in the United States. Insecticides should always be used with caution, avoiding direct inhalation of spray or smoke.
- **Optimum protection can be provided by applying the repellents described in the following sections to clothing and to exposed skin.**

Repellents for Use on Skin and Clothing

CDC has evaluated information published in peer-reviewed scientific literature and data available from EPA to identify several EPA-registered products that provide repellent activity sufficient to help people avoid the bites of disease-carrying mosquitoes. Products containing the following active ingredients typically provide reasonably long-lasting protection:

- **DEET** (chemical name: *N,N*-diethyl-*m*-toluamide or *N,N*-diethyl-3-methyl-benzamide). Products containing DEET include but are not limited to Off!, Cutter, Sawyer, and Ultrathon.
- **Picaridin** (KBR 3023, aka Bayrepel, and icaridin outside the United States; chemical name 2-(2-hydroxyethyl)-1-piperidinecarboxylic acid 1-methylpropyl ester). Products containing picaridin include but are not limited to Cutter Advanced, Skin So Soft Bug Guard Plus and Autan (outside the United States).
- **Oil of lemon eucalyptus*** or **PMD** (chemical name: *para*-menthane-3,8-diol) the synthesized version of oil of lemon eucalyptus. Products containing OLE and PMD include but are not limited to Repel.
- **IR3535** (chemical name: 3-[*N*-butyl-*N*-acetyl]-aminopropionic acid, ethyl ester) Products containing IR3535 include but are not limited to Skin so Soft Bug Guard Plus Expedition.

***Note:** This recommendation refers to EPA-registered repellent products containing the active ingredient oil of lemon eucalyptus (or PMD). “Pure” oil of lemon eucalyptus (e.g., essential oil) is not the same product and has not received similar, validated testing for safety and efficacy, is not registered with EPA as an insect repellent, and is not covered by this recommendation.

EPA characterizes the active ingredients DEET and picaridin as “conventional repellents” and oil of lemon eucalyptus, PMD, and IR3535 as “biopesticide repellents,” which are derived from natural materials.