

## Health

### Health Information for International Travelers

Must-read health website for everyone traveling abroad:

[www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov) U.S. Centers for Disease Control

The CDC recommends that all travelers review the status of the following inoculations:

- Tetanus
- Hepatitis A
- Hepatitis B

#### Immunizations:

- **At least 4-6 weeks prior to departure**, contact your doctor, clinic, state health department, or the Travel Clinic at ISU's Thielen Student Health Center regarding **immunizations and medication**.

#### Travel insurance:

- You are required to have adequate health insurance coverage while abroad. The types of insurance coverage required are 1) repatriation, 2) evacuation, and 3) health care.
- You are required to purchase an International Student Identity Card (ISIC). The ISIC provides adequate evacuation and repatriation coverage and a small amount of emergency medical care coverage. The card is available from the Study Abroad Center, from STA Travel, and at [www.myisic.com](http://www.myisic.com). Please note that the ISIC does not include adequate health coverage. You are free to purchase any policy of your choosing. The Study Abroad Center has compiled a list, accessible on the SAC website, of some of the available options. If you are already covered by an existing policy, check with the company to determine if you are covered while abroad. Students carrying the ISU student health plan may have adequate health coverage, but check your coverage dates to ensure that they include your program dates.

#### Prescriptions:

- Take enough **refills** to last the entire trip.
- Keep all prescription medication in the **original containers**.
- Take an **original written prescription**, preferably written for a generic version of your medication.
- If you wear **glasses or contacts**, take along a spare pair and take your lens prescription with you.
- If you take a **narcotic**, take **more than two** medications, or take a medication by **injection**, take a letter from your physician that describes your medical condition and the need to carry the medications and/or syringes with you. Having a copy of the letter translated into your host country language might be beneficial, too.

#### Chronic medical conditions:

- Wear a **medical tag** explaining your illness or allergies. Medic Alert

Foundation International is a worldwide organization that supplies tags containing an identification number, the medical information, and a toll-free telephone number to call in case of emergencies. Once you join, you are a lifetime member. Check at your local drugstore, or contact Medic Alert, P.O. Box 1009, Turlock CA 95380.

- **Carry a card** in your wallet identifying your illness (Medic Alert can supply this, also), and have someone translate the information into each foreign language you will encounter on your trip.
- Learn **helpful phrases** in foreign languages (“I am a diabetic”, “I need a doctor”, etc.).

**First-aid kit:**

- Especially if you’re traveling extensively or going to remote areas, consider taking along the following: insect repellent; water disinfectant; thermometer; Band-Aids; moleskin for blisters; Pepto-Bismol or Imodium for diarrhea; antacid; aspirin or substitute; cold and cough medication; mild laxative; sunscreen; sunburn medication; anti-fungal/ anti-itch medication; anti-bacterial cream or spray; tweezers; bee sting kit (if you’re allergic).

**Traveler’s diarrhea:**

- The biggest problem with diarrhea is dehydration.
- Drink lots of fluids: fruit juices, or soft drinks without caffeine.
- Eat salted crackers or other starchy foods (rice, bread); bananas are good, too.
- Avoid dairy products.
- If no improvement in a week and accompanied by fever, see a physician.

**Dealing with jet lag:**

- Drink lots of fluids: water, juice, soft drinks (without caffeine).
- Avoid alcohol.
- Eat lightly.
- Get up and walk around at least once an hour.
- Try to get plenty of sleep before departure.
- Anticipate a day of adjustment for each time zone you cross.
- Try the **Ehret method** of dealing with jet lag: Three days in advance of your trip, start shifting your activities as if you are already in the new time zone. Alter your eating habits as follows:
  - Three days prior: Feast day, with three full meals; make breakfast and lunch high in protein, dinner high in carbohydrates.
  - Two days prior: Fast day, with low calories and low carbohydrates (soups and salads), with caffeine only in the afternoon.
  - One day prior: Feast day (see above).
  - Day of departure: Fast day, with lots of liquids.
  - On arrival: If you arrive in the morning, eat a high-protein meal; if you arrive in the evening, eat a high-carbohydrate meal.