

Premier Assist

10 Tips for Staying Healthy When Traveling for Business Overseas



- 1 VISIT THE DOC; VISIT EARLY.** Many people may think they can wait until the last minute to schedule doctor visits for travel vaccinations. What many travelers don't realize is that it may take time for some vaccines to become effective. To be safe, schedule a doctor visit four to six weeks in advance of a trip.
- 2 BRING EXTRA MEDS.** Employees may not think they need extra medication, but they never know if they could be stranded overseas. For this reason, they are advised to carry additional medicines for at least a week or more over what would be needed for the length of the trip. It also is a good idea to make sure they have a doctor's note for needles and/or liquid medicines so they don't run into problems when boarding.
- 3 KNOW THE GENERIC.** Tell your employees to bring a complete list of all medications - including generic and trade names. They may not know that generic names are NOT the same from country to country. Also, some prescription medicines are outlawed in foreign countries. Employees should check with the U.S. embassy to verify there are no restrictions.
- 4 HAVE THOSE PHONE NUMBERS.** They also should bring with them all doctors' phone numbers, as well as the phone number of their travel assistance company - and carry them AT ALL TIMES.
- 5 CARRY A DOC'S NOTE.** Those individuals with allergies, particularly to different medications, should have a doctor's note with them - in case they are unconscious or unable to speak.
- 6 COPIES, COPIES, COPIES.** Employees can never have too many copies of records. Advise your travelers to keep additional copies of medical records and doctors' phone numbers back home with family or friends, in case they need to be contacted.
- 7 THE HELPFUL HOTEL.** An employee's hotel can be his or her best friend, when it comes to health issues. For minor injuries and ailments, employees can ask their hotel to refer them to a local doctor. Many hotels work regularly with doctors, who will visit guests in their rooms, charge a nominal fee, and often speak English.
- 8 WATCH THE WATER.** Travelers can check CDC advisories and with their doctors as well, to find out if they can drink the water in a certain country. Also, sometimes water is safe in some regions of a country, but not others - which travelers may not realize.
- 9 BEWARE THE FRUITS & VEGGIES.** People often forget that a lot of local foods are washed and handled in local waters. So, along with drinking bottled water in certain countries, travelers should remember to brush their teeth with bottled water and avoid ice cubes as well as fresh fruit and vegetables that are washed in local waters.
- 10 WORK THE WEB.** Have travelers review the websites of both the Centers for Disease Control (www.cdc.gov) and the World Health Organization (www.who.org) for useful information on health issues, epidemics, and other concerns that may affect the region to which they are traveling.