

STAYING SAFE AND HEALTHY ABROAD

Living and studying in another country can be one of the most rewarding experiences you will ever have. It may also be one of the most challenging experiences as you adjust to the jet lag, culture shock, a new environment, different customs, food, health practices and other ways of life. There are also some risks involved in international travel, just as there are risks involved in living at home where you also might be the victim of an accident, crime, illness or other unpleasant circumstance. It is critical that you understand YOUR OWN ROLE in increasing the odds for a safe and healthy stay abroad. To this end, we ask that you read the following guidelines carefully and completely, that you request clarification of any material you do not understand PRIOR to departing from the U.S., and that you conduct yourself in a courteous and fitting manner at all times while abroad.

HEALTH

Insurance:

Students going on the Ithaca College London Center program, exchange program, or short-term program, as well as students going on certain affiliated programs will be required to purchase the Ithaca College Study Abroad Insurance Plan. This is very comprehensive insurance and should be sufficient for your time abroad. See your orientation packet for details about the coverage and how to access the benefits.

Those not required to purchase the Ithaca College Study Abroad Insurance Plan should be sure to review your medical insurance policy(s). We suggest you make a list of the insurance coverage you have, i.e., Ithaca College Student Plan and/or private carrier, the International Student I.D. and any coverage provided by your study abroad program. After reviewing your coverage, make sure you fully understand how expenses accrued abroad will be covered. When checking on your insurance a few important points to be sure you understand are:

- Does the insurance cover students engaged in international education while outside their home country?
- What is the maximum sickness and injury benefit?
- Are pre-existing conditions covered?
- What is the maximum coverage for accidental death?
- What is the maximum coverage for accidental dismemberment?
- Does the policy cover Emergency Medical Transportation/Evacuation and if so, what is the maximum payable?
- Does the policy cover Repatriation of remains and if so what is the maximum payable?
- Will the policy pay directly to health care providers abroad (and if so, are there limits), or will you need to file for reimbursement?

Medical Needs:

Keep in mind that all students have different medical needs and the health care services vary from one country to another. If you have a medical condition, bring along a health record that includes your health care provider's name, address and telephone number and a summary of your medical history. Bring an adequate supply of any medications and a list of the medications' generic names in case you need to have a prescription filled. It is strongly recommended that you inform the Study Abroad Office or the on-site director of an existing health problem. In an emergency situation it is crucial that this information be available.

Emergency Care:

Chubb/Europ Assistance USA provides international health insurance coverage as well as security services to Ithaca College students and employees and can assist with finding English-speaking providers or helping you obtain coverage during an emergency abroad. From the U.S., you can call toll-free at 1-800-243-6124 or email OPS@europassistance-usa.com. From abroad, you can call them collect at 1-202-659-7803.

If you are going on a program where you are not covered by the Chubb/Europ Assistance USA plan, the International Association for Medical Assistance, www.iamat.org, has information about English speaking physicians around the world, as well as information about health precautions you may need to take. The American Embassy in the country you are visiting can also provide referrals to English-speaking physicians.

Medical/dental examinations:

Before leaving the U.S. have a complete physical examination with your personal health care provider. Inform your health care provider of your travel plans before the appointment so that he/she can provide you with current health care information and medication recommendations for your destination. Have your teeth cleaned, examined and if necessary, repaired before your departure. If you wear eyeglasses and/or contact lenses take along an extra pair. If your contact lenses require a specific cleaning and care regimen you should take along enough solution to last the length of your visit.

Medical Kit:

We recommend you pack a basic first aid kit containing bandages, disinfectant, an oral thermometer, as well as non-prescription items such as aspirin, antacids, cold medication, sunscreen, etc.

SAFETY/SECURITY

- ⇒ Do not leave your bags or belongings unattended at any time. Security staff at airports or train stations is instructed to remove and destroy any unattended luggage. Do not agree to carry or look after packages or suitcases for anyone. Make sure no one puts anything in your luggage. Never agree to drive a car for someone else, especially across national borders.
- ⇒ Be aware of the laws of the country you are in. You must abide by or be prepared to be prosecuted in accordance with the laws of that country. For example, in Singapore, it is illegal to chew gum; in Spain, foreigners are prohibited from participating in political demonstrations and in England it is a serious offense to carry a mace or pepper spray. If you are arrested and prosecuted, your study abroad program and the U.S. government can do little to intervene on your behalf.
- ⇒ Never keep all your documents and money in one place. Take several photocopies of your passport information page and your visa, leave a copy with your parents, and take one with you taped to the inside of your suitcase. In case of loss or theft this will speed up the replacement process.
- ⇒ Do not carry large amounts of cash. We recommend the use of ATM cards, but check with your bank first to make sure you won't have any problems using it while abroad.
- ⇒ Register your overseas address and phone number with the nearest U.S. Embassy or Consulate immediately. (Check with your site program director to see if the program does it for you)
- ⇒ Keep on-site director(s) informed of your whereabouts. You should let the on-site director(s) and/or your host family know in advance of any traveling you plan to do.
- ⇒ Use caution especially when traveling alone. Travel with a friend or a small group when possible.
- ⇒ Do not participate in any political activities in the countries you visit. Avoid angry groups or demonstrations. If you come across any situation that seems potentially hazardous, leave the area immediately.
- ⇒ Do not give out information carelessly about other students or events. Do not give strangers your address or phone number or those of other students in your program. Do not share information about your program activities or locations.
- ⇒ If you are aware of any acts of terrorism or other violence in your city or community, do the best you can to remain well-informed. Listen to whatever news alerts are available. Keep in touch with the site coordinator or director of your study abroad program. Let your site director know immediately of any suspicious events that you observe in or around the premises where your program is held.
- ⇒ Remember a general rule: Don't stand out as a group or individual. Try to blend with the surroundings; be invisible. Traveling as an identifiable American group will likely create a greater element of risk than protection.
- ⇒ Follow the cultural norms regarding dress and clothing wherever you are, to the greatest extent possible. You may become the target of unwanted attention if your attire seems immodest or otherwise inappropriate according to local custom.