Preparing for International Health Experiences

Safe and Healthy Travel
UT Southwestern Medical School
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Questions this presentation will help answer . . .

• When should I apply for my passport?

• How do I know whether I need a visa for my international elective?

• What is the best website to check for country-specific health updates?

• What types of insurance are there and which ones do I need?

• Can you give me some additional resources to help me prepare for my elective?
Questions this presentation will not answer . . .

• Where should I go?

• How do I get funding and approval from UT Southwestern to travel?

• What are some ethical dilemmas I should prepare to face in a foreign country?

• How can I set up a research project in a foreign country?

• How do I perform an emergent intubation in a newborn baby with a hollowed out bamboo stalk?
Logistics of Preparing for International Travel

• Necessary Documents

• Safety

• Travel Arrangements

• Insurance Options

• Health Precautions
Necessary Documents

• Passport
  
  • Apply early, no later than 2 months before departure for a first time passport

  • Passport expiration date must be at least 6 months past the expected day of return to US

• Visa

  • Visit the U.S. State Department website: [http://travel.state.gov](http://travel.state.gov) to find out if the country you are visiting requires a visa

  • Cost may be $0 - $300 and visa may take weeks to months to process
Safety

• Practice good judgment
  • always be aware of surroundings
  • be especially careful when exchanging or withdrawing money
  • avoid traveling at night if possible

• Smart Traveler Enrollment Program: [http://travel.state.gov/travel/tips/registration/registration_4789.html](http://travel.state.gov/travel/tips/registration/registration_4789.html)

• International SOS - offered by UT Southwestern at no cost: [http://www.utsystem.edu/travel/international.htm](http://www.utsystem.edu/travel/international.htm)
Travel Arrangements

• Consider planning travel with help of UT Southwestern Travel Agents

• Flights
  
  • Consider time of day of arrival in (and departure from) your destination country and availability of safe transport at that time of day

• Transport to and from airport
  
  • Ensure you have established safe transport on the ground from the airport and back to the airport at the end of your trip
Insurance Options

• Flight Insurance - sometimes offered by airline company. Full refund for trip cancellation. **Optional**.

• Travel Insurance/Evacuation Insurance - covers unexpected evacuation and can be extremely helpful if traveling to a remote area. **Essential**, usually expensive, but covered through the UT System International SOS, free for students and residents.

• Health Insurance - contact health insurance company to inquire about coverage while out of the country. **Essential**.
Health Precautions

• Immunizations - Country-specific information provided at: http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/ Most vaccines are available at UT Student Health Center, almost all are offered at Dallas County Health Department.

• Common immunizations and their cost: http://www.dallascounty.org/department/hhs/vaccinefees.html

• Oral typhoid $50, Hepatitis A $50/immunization, 2 are needed to complete the series, Yellow fever $90

• Malaria prophylaxis - CDC website or yellow book, consider cost, local susceptibilities, as well as side effect profile, mosquito net information

• Malaria prophylaxis options and advantages/disadvantages: http://www.cdc.gov/malaria/travelers/drugs.html
Health Precautions

• Reproductive Health - Male and female reproductive health precautions

• Sun protection - Sun screen and hats

• Eating/Drinking - Water purification options: boiling, iodine drops or crystals, chlorine, filter

• First aid kit - What to include:
  • Over the counter pain medications - Acetaminophen, Ibuprofen, Naproxen
  • Band-Aids, Ace-wrap
  • Antihistamines, Decongestants, Allergy medications
  • Hydrocortisone for bug bites
  • Peptobismol
In Summary

- **Necessary Documents** - Passport and/or visa, [http://travel.state.gov](http://travel.state.gov)

- **Safety** - STEP and International SOS

- **Travel Arrangements** - Double-check travel times, may use UT Southwestern-affiliated travel agents

- **Insurance Options** – Traveler/Evacuation, and Health Insurance

- **Health Precautions** - immunizations, medications, reproductive health, sun protection, first-aid
Why participate in an International Elective?

• What would you like to learn?

• What could you possibly teach?

• What are you hoping to give?

• What are you hoping to gain?
HIV Clinical Fellowship, Vaalwater, South Africa

- Clinic Setting
- Things I learned
- Teaching Topics
- Stages of Grief
- For Fun
Clinic Setting: The Community
Ons - Sock: Die Water R - Assemble.
Clinic Setting: The Language
Clinic Setting: The Waterberg Welfare Society
What would you like to learn?
Things I Learned: Sometimes the patient knows best, even if their ideas are unusual . . .
Things I Learned: Sometimes things get worse before they get better . . . Mr. JL
Things I Learned: Occasionally, patients present exactly as expected . . .
What could you teach?
Teaching Topics: Tuberculosis series
Teaching Topics:
Home Based Carers,
Vital Signs Series
Teaching Topics: Anemia series
What are you hoping to give?
Stages of Grief

• Elisabeth Kübler-Ross, “On Death and Dying”

• Five stages of grief:
  • denial, depression, anger, bargaining, acceptance

• Experienced by doctor and patient alike
Stages of Grief: Denial - Mr. DC
Stages of Grief: Depression - Mr. AM
Stages of Grief: Anger - Mrs. SM
Stages of Grief:
Bargaining - Mr. AM
Stages of Grief: Acceptance - Mr. July Letsebe
For Fun
References and Helpful Resources

• [http://travel.state.gov](http://travel.state.gov)


• Student Handbook for Global Engagement: written for and by students from the University of Michigan with the support of the Center for Global Health. November 2010. Licensed under the Creative Commons license Attribution Non-Commercial Share Alike (cc by-nc-sa).

• UT Southwestern Global Health Interest Group [http://ghig.net/index/html](http://ghig.net/index/html)

• Leisure books: Mountains Beyond Mountains by Tracy Kidder, Three Cups of Tea by Greg Mortenson, Banker to the Poor by Muhammad Yunus, The Spirit Catches You and You Fall Down: A Hmong Child, Her American Doctors, and the Collision of Two Cultures by Anne Fadiman