

SAFETY GUIDELINES FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDY

The faculty and staff of the FIU Herbert Wertheim College of Medicine (HWCOC) believes that study experiences abroad can be valuable to the professional growth of medical students and other healthcare professionals. Students should understand that participating in international experiences may include some degree of risk to themselves and others. Students should also remember that the professional standards that apply to them at home, equally apply to them when they study abroad. One of the most important aspects to consider while traveling abroad is personal safety. HWCOC holds the safety of our students as top priority.

In the interest of student and patient safety and in keeping with the medical school's commitment to providing its' students a quality educational experience, the following guidelines have been established for FIU medical students who pursue international study.

In the planning stages:

1. Read up on the safety and security situation of chosen destination before making travel arrangements, determine if it is safe to travel to destination. Ask yourself:
 - a. How are foreigners viewed in this country?
 - b. Have there been any recent kidnappings?
 - c. What is the current political situation in this country?
 - d. What is this country's perception of women?
2. Learn about destination and visit websites such as U.S. State Department, CIA World Factbook, CDC, and U.S. Embassy
3. Review the US Department of State website, which provides country-specific information and lists Travel Warnings and Alerts, www.travel.state.gov
 - a. HWCOC does not support students to travel to countries listed on the US State Department travel warning list.
4. Consult with Program Directors and in-country hosts to coordinate specific activities, travel logistics, lodging, transportation, etc.
5. Read and understand HWCOC International Studies Policies

Once you have done careful research:

1. Register your trip with the Office of Student Affairs and fill out the International Study Application
 - a. Help us locate and contact you in case of an emergency
 - b. Register with the U.S. State Department through the Smart Traveler Enrollment Program if you are a U.S. citizen. If you are not a U.S. citizen, register with your Embassy
 - c. Help the State Department assist you in an emergency
2. Register your trip with the FIU Office of Study Abroad
 - a. Fill out application
 - b. Pay for emergency travel assistance through them.
 - i. Print the card and keep in your wallet or purse
 - ii. Email it to yourself in case your wallet or purse is lost or stolen
3. Check your health insurance coverage and ensure you're covered while abroad, including chronic medical conditions
4. Share a copy of your itinerary with family or a friend. Provide them with a copy of your passport and any visas.
5. Make copies of the following documents, and keep a copy in your luggage (separate from originals), scan and email copies to yourself:

- a. Passport identification page
 - b. Visa (if applicable)
 - c. Driver's license
 - d. Insurance cards Credit cards (front and back)
 - e. Flight and other travel itineraries
 - f. Immunizations and prescriptions
6. Schedule an appointment with your primary care physician 6-8 weeks before you depart and discuss:
 - a. Vaccinations (you may need a series over time)
 - b. Traveling with medication
 - c. Other health concerns
 7. Students must continually monitor the site's safety and security conditions. Since travel warnings may change at any point leading to and during travel.
 8. Students are highly recommended to attend a Pre-Departure Travel Workshop

Once you are abroad:

1. Keep yourself from situations for which you are not trained.
2. Get to know the people with whom you are working with. They are an important resource in case anything goes wrong.
3. Respect the customs and health practices of the people with whom you are working.
4. Remember, your health is as important as the health of your patients. Practice caution while working, eating and traveling.
 - a. While abroad be careful with food, drink bottled or purified water, and do not order beverages with ice.
5. Dress appropriately. To earn respect, dress conservatively, observe how local professionals dress, and follow their example.
6. Keep some U.S. dollars stashed somewhere safe during your trip. You always want to have backup cash in case of an emergency.
7. Danger is relative. Even when you're abroad, you can be just as safe or unsafe as you would back at home (even when traveling in a dangerous place). Always know where you're going and carry yourself confidently.
 - a. If you are headed out alone, leave a note in your room (or update your social media status) about where you are headed, what time you left, and when you plan to return.
 - b. Find taxi or other transportation services that are vetted and that you can trust.
8. The media can cause a lot of hype—remember that many of the protests and critical events you'll hear about are usually confined to one place, not a whole city. Try to avoid the problem area, and make sure you fully understand the events in the local and global news context.

What to do in case of an emergency:

If you encounter an emergency while traveling, take the following steps.

1. When serious injury or illness has occurred, immediately seek medical treatment at the closest medical facility.
2. Call the Office of Student Affairs After Hours Emergency Line at 305-348-0696 or Main Line at 305-348-0644.
3. Contact the nearest U.S. Embassy or consular service.
4. Contact Cultural Insurance Services International at (855)327-1411, worldwide call (01-312) 935-1703 (collect calls accepted). U.S. country code 01
 - a. How to make collect call
 - i. Have ready the name, telephone number, area code and country of the person you wish to call. However, be aware that most cell phone providers do not allow collect calls to be made to a cell phone.

- ii. Pick up the phone in whatever country you're in, wait for the dial tone and dial "0170."
- iii. Give the international operator the name, country and number of the person that you wish to call, and you will be connected.

Important Resources:

- [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#)
- [U.S. Department of Health and Human Services](#)
- [U.S. Embassy Homepage](#)
- [World Health Organization](#)
- [Smart Traveler Enrollment Program](#)
- [Office of Student Affairs, Student Services](#)
- [Office of Study Abroad](#)

Country Information and Travel Advisories

- [Travel Health Information Service](#)
- [U.S. State Department Bureau of Consular Affairs](#)

Immunizations

- Up to Date immunization recommendations from the CDC
- WHO recommendations