



Health and Safety Advice for DOCARE Volunteers

A famous haiku (well, it's from a cartoon) says:

*Traveler's nightmare
becomes a hilarious
story later on.*

While it might be true, we see no need for you to accumulate hilarious stories with DOCARE.... especially not the kind with personal illness or injury factoring into the tale's denouement. DOCARE much prefers that all our participants stay safe and healthy before, during, and after travel with us.

To ensure you remain well, we ask all participants to do the following:

Before Traveling

1. Use the CDC websites, guidebooks and travel medicine texts to ensure you're versed in the healthcare issues affecting the country you're traveling to. [Click here to get started.](#)
2. Visit your primary care physician or local travel medicine clinic to get up to date on your vaccinations, receive advice and/or prescriptions for preventing and treating tropical diseases in your destination country, and address any existing personal medical issues that might affect your travel. Get this done four to six weeks before you travel, as a series of actions might be required to adequately prepare for travel.
3. Pack personal first aid and hygiene items for personal use during the trip. Please see the packing list (PDF) on the DOCARE website.
4. Get travel medical and evacuation (medevac) insurance. DOCARE recommends being insured to a \$500,000 level. Please note that this insurance is different from trip cancellation insurance, and you might wish to get both types of policies. See this [list of providers](#) to get started in picking a plan.
5. Review and sign off on the official DOCARE liability form. This is integrated into our trip application form and can also be obtained from your trip director.
6. Submit an [emergency contact form](#) to DOCARE. This information will be shared with the trip director to help ensure your safety.

While Traveling

7. Store copies of your passport page with your family back home, in your email inbox, and on your person.
8. Know what to do in the case of an accident or crime: keep the contact information for the local US Embassy, trip director, and your insurance provider in the same places as your passport page.
9. Adhere to any preventive care or medical regimen necessary for your wellbeing. This can include taking malaria prophylaxis, avoiding mosquito bites, and not drinking water from unclean sources, as well as any healthcare regimen personal to you.

After Traveling

10. Help others: complete the DOCARE post-trip survey to ensure that we can use your knowledge to improve the health and safety of the volunteers who go on trips after you.