Living and studying abroad means encountering new environments and interacting with different cultures. This handout is based on health advice from the Mayo Clinic and can assist you in safely and effectively planning for your study-abroad experience.

Healthy traveling is, in part, a result of the preparation you do before travel. Learning about local customs, and appreciating culturally sensitive behavior are important parts of this preparation. But it’s also about being vigilant, flexible and creative while on your journey. There are things that you simply can’t control or plan for. For example, you can’t always avoid exposure to infectious disease or getting an insect bite or getting lost in an unfamiliar place. But being aware of your options and ready to respond to the challenges can help make your journey a gratifying and fulfilling experience.

Start planning

These questions may help guide your pre-departure decisions:

- How long will you be traveling? Will this be a short trip (about 14 days or less) or an extended stay? Will you stay at one location or visit different places in the region?

- How will you be traveling? What kind of transportation will get you to your destination? How will you get around once you’re there? Will you be using public transportation?

- Where will you be staying? What kinds of accommodations will you have for sleeping and bathing? Is food service prearranged during your stay or will you be responsible for some or all of your meals?

- What will you be doing? Will you spend your time primarily outdoors or indoors? Will you be in urban or rural settings? Will you be primarily in classrooms or doing fieldwork or service? Will you be visiting places of special religious or cultural significance to the host region?

**Start planning**

Food and water safety........................................pg. 7
Outdoor safety......................................................pg. 8
Traveling with special needs.................................pg. 10
Coming home........................................................pg. 10

**Get ready to go**........................................pg. 2

**Insurance info**........................................pg. 3

**Packing tips**.....................................................pg. 3

**Travel hazards**........................................pg. 5

**Food and water safety**

**Outdoor safety**

**Traveling with special needs**

**Coming home**

---

Credit: Material for this handout has been adapted from the Mayo Clinic Women's Health Source Healthy Traveling special report.
• What's the weather forecast? What is a typical temperature range over the time of your stay? Will it be a rainy or dry season? What other elements might you encounter: bright sunshine, strong winds, high humidity? Will you stay primarily at high or low elevations?

• What are your health risks? Are you familiar with the location, or is it completely new? Are there health advisories for your destination? What do you know about the health care system? What about general standards of hygiene and sanitation?

• What is your current state of health? Have you had recent medical and dental checkups? If you have a chronic condition, are you aware of how to respond to an emergency? Will your health limit the type of trip you're considering in any way?

Let your answers to these questions guide your travel planning. Good planning can prepare you for any circumstance.

Health Advisories

You can find health advisories for individual countries in the “Travelers’ Health” section of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) website (www.cdc.gov/travel). Click the “Destinations” link.

Getting ready to go

We ask you to see a health care provider and complete the Health Assessment Form during the term prior to your study-abroad program. If you’re visiting a developing country, we recommend that you make an appointment at a travel medicine clinic. This consultation should take place at least four to eight weeks before the journey (six months ahead if you’re traveling for more than three months) to ensure that any necessary medications can be prescribed and that immunizations have time to take effect. A dental checkup also may be advisable. If you’re leaving on short notice, it’s still worthwhile to make an appointment as soon as travel plans are made.

Health risks may be slightly greater for certain groups — such as people with immunosuppression or other underlying medical conditions — although, if they are in good health and well prepared, they shouldn’t be deterred from traveling.

Have you had your shots?

Before you leave, make sure you’re up to date on your immunizations. Start by visiting the websites of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the World Health Organization (WHO) or the U.S. State Department’s Overseas Citizens Services. These organizations can tell you which vaccines are recommended or required for the countries you plan to visit. It’s best to receive the vaccines well in advance, as it may take several weeks for immunity to develop.

Preparing for travel may require:

• **Routine vaccines.** Annual shots are necessary to protect against influenza. Although you already may have been immunized in childhood for pneumococcal, measles, varicella, polio, tetanus, diphtheria and pertussis, your health care provider will advise whether an adult booster is needed.

• **Additional vaccines.** Some vaccines may be recommended to protect you from illnesses that are common in parts of the world where you are traveling, including hepatitis A, hepatitis B, Japanese encephalitis, menigococcal meningitis, rabies, typhoid and yellow fever. The decision about which ones you need is based largely on your destination, age, health status and previous immunizations.

• **Other preventative measures.** Parts of Africa, Asia, South America, Mexico and Central America are risk areas for malaria. Because malaria is transmitted by mosquitoes, insect repellents that contain DEET or picaridin are necessary. You may also need antimalarial medications such as chloroquine (Aralen), mefloquine (Lariam), doxycycline (numerous brands), or a drug that combines atovaquone and proguanil (Malarone).

Ask your health care provider or a travel medicine specialist which antimalarial medication is the right one for you. In order for it to be effective, you’ll need to start taking the drug before arriving in the malarial region in order to establish it in your system. You’ll also need to continue taking it for a period of time after you leave the region.
Words of caution: Some of the world’s most life-threatening infections, including HIV/AIDS and malaria, are not preventable by vaccines, and no vaccine is 100 percent effective at preventing illness. You still need to take common-sense precautions to decrease your risk of illness. Discuss the risks and benefits of any vaccine with your health care provider before getting immunized.

Travel insurance

“Expect the best, but prepare for the worst” should be the official travelers' motto. All students on Carleton programs receive international medical, security, and travel assistance coverage through CISI --Cultural Insurance Services International (www.culturalinsurance.com). Most non-Carleton programs are insured through CISI or similar companies, but students should verify this with their programs.

CISI provides physician referrals, covers medical emergency evacuation, medically supervised repatriation, security evacuation assistance, lost document advice, legal referrals, AND comprehensive medical insurance while you are abroad. This coverage is valid for the duration of the program; you may purchase additional days directly from CISI for personal travel. Carleton enrolls students into CISI, but students must log-in to their accounts and print their personalized insurance cards. CISI, in partnership with AXA Assistance also provides travel, security, and medical advice before, during, and after the program.

CISI has direct billing agreements with many hospitals abroad, but students should be prepared to pay for medical services up front and submit a claim to CISI for reimbursement.

Packing your bags

Good advice for all travelers is to pack light. This means careful planning so that you can satisfy whatever clothing changes you need with the fewest number of items. Anything that can be layered may be the best choice — layering allows you to adapt easily to weather changes. Wear comfortable shoes that you’ve already had a chance to break in. Make sure you have a waterproofed jacket or outer garment. Use lightweight luggage equipped with sturdy wheels, telescoping handles or shoulder straps.

Medical equipment, such as wheelchairs, spare batteries and battery chargers, isn’t included in your baggage limit with airlines and can be transported at no extra charge. Just be sure that the bags or boxes contain medical supplies and nothing else. Also, you may need to pack a plug or voltage adapter for using electrical appliances in a foreign country.
Supplies to carry with you

Be prepared for minor mishaps. Depending on your needs and health status, consider packing these basic supplies on your journey:

- Alcohol-based hand sanitizer
- Antacid tablets or heartburn medication
- Antibacterial cream
- Anti-diarrheal medication
- Antihistamines
- Cortisone cream (insect bites and itch relief)
- Decongestant
- Eyewash solution
- Eyeglasses (spare pair and repair kit) and sunglasses
- Fever and pain relief medication
- Mosquito repellent with DEET or picaridin
- Stool softener
- Sunscreen with a minimum sun protection factor (SPF) of 30
- Water purification supplies (tablets or purifiers)

Simple first-aid kit

- Adhesive bandages, tape and sterile dressing
- Cotton balls and swabs
- ACE bandages
- Moleskin (soft cotton padding for blisters)
- Scissors or pocketknife that has small scissors (not allowed in carry-on bags)
- Thermometer
- Tweezers

How can a travel medicine clinic help you?

Health care providers at a travel medicine clinic are often specialists in tropical medicine and infectious diseases. Services offered at the clinics vary widely. Some clinics provide vaccinations and general information while others give you comprehensive overviews of the health hazards you may encounter while traveling, with practical advice on how to stay healthy. The clinics typically are affiliated with medical centers or universities. Check the directory at the International Society of Travel Medicine website (www.istm.org). In general, it's useful to see a travel medicine clinic before taking long trips (four or more weeks) to any country and before traveling to most countries in Asia, Africa, and Latin America, especially if you have a medical condition.

Prescription medications

Carry all prescription medications in their original containers with clearly typed labels. Take more than enough to last through your trip — it can be challenging to get prescriptions filled abroad. Try to pack all prescription medications in your carry-on bag.

Bring a copy of your prescriptions with you, and be sure your health care provider indicates both the brand name and the generic name of the drug. Depending on where you are, medications with the same brand name may have very different active ingredients. It's also a good idea to leave a copy of this information at home with a friend or relative.

If you have a medical condition that may require emergency care, wear a bracelet or necklace or carry a card that identifies your condition. If you’re taking a controlled substance, such as a prescription narcotic drug, spare yourself an embarrassing encounter with customs agents by obtaining a letter of authorization from your health care provider.

Important documents

In the event of a medical emergency, carry a card with you that contains basic medical information such as your blood type, drug allergies, contact information for your primary care health care provider and your insurance company (as well as your policy number), and contact information for a relative or friend.

For an extended trip or travel outside the U.S., consider bringing your most recent medical reports, such as electrocardiograms, immunization certificates and eyeglasses prescription. Your health care provider can provide you with copies.
Managing common travel hazards

The fastest way to travel — by airplane — is also one of the safest. Yet by placing you in a pressurized cabin thousands of feet in the air, moving at a speed of hundreds of miles per hour, air travel does subject your body to special challenges. Here are common problems that you might experience:

Dehydration

The cabin of an airplane has extremely low humidity. This dry environment makes it harder to keep up with your body’s normal fluid loss, increasing the chances that you’ll become dehydrated. Signs of dehydration include dry mouth, lack of tears, little or no urine, and feeling lethargic, fatigued, dizzy or lightheaded.

To prevent dehydration, drink plenty of liquids such as water and fruit juices during your flight. Limit alcohol and caffeine because of their diuretic and dehydrating effects. Consider carrying a bottle of water with you on the plane (purchased at the airport after you’ve passed through security) and make a point of drinking from it at regular intervals.

Blood clots

Sitting in a cramped seat for hours increases your risk of developing potentially dangerous blood clots in your legs. The problem can happen during any form of travel, but it’s more common on long airplane flights. The clots interfere with normal blood flow through your blood vessels and can break loose and lodge in a lung artery. To prevent a blood clot from forming:

- While in your seat, stretch your legs occasionally and move your feet up and down.
- Walk around the airplane cabin every two to three hours.
- Drink plenty of water to prevent dehydration.
- Wear loose, comfortable clothing and shoes.
- Consider below-the-knee compression stockings, which improve blood flow by applying gentle pressure to your leg muscles.
- Ask your health care provider if aspirin might be helpful. Small doses of aspirin may help prevent clots. Remember to check with your health care provider first - aspirin is not recommended for everyone.

Jet lag

Flying across three or more time zones can disrupt your normal sleep-wake cycle. Until your internal clock adjusts, you’ll find yourself awake and sleepless during the night and feeling tired, foggy and just plain cranky during the day. This out-of-synch feeling is called jet lag. To prevent jet lag:

- Plan a relaxing routine, including regular exercise, on the day before your trip. Also, get a good night’s sleep.
- Adopt a sleep-wake pattern that’s similar to what you’ll have at your destination. Begin this a day or two before you depart.
- Wear loose, comfortable clothing in flight that may help you relax and rest more easily.
- Drink plenty of water during your flight to prevent dehydration. Avoid alcohol and caffeinated beverages.
- Adopt the schedule of your destination immediately upon arrival — don’t stick with “home” time. Reset your watch to local time.
- Avoid sleeping pills during the flight. If you anticipate trouble sleeping after reaching your destination, consider taking a mild sleeping pill at bedtime for two to three days, unless your health care provider advises otherwise.

Motion sickness

It doesn’t matter which type of transportation you use — car, boat, airplane, train — all can cause your stomach to feel queasy. Motion sickness is usually present from the moment you start moving, building rapidly from a restless feeling into a cold sweat, dizziness and then vomiting. The symptoms usually get better as soon as the motion stops.

You may be able to escape motion sickness by being careful about where you choose to sit. On a plane, try to reserve a seat over the front edge of a wing. Once aboard, direct the air vent toward your face. In a car, drive or sit in the front passenger’s seat — avoid back seats. Never ride facing backward.
If you’re susceptible to motion sickness:
- Focus your eyes on the horizon or a distant, stationary object.
- Keep your head still, rested against a seat back.
- If possible, sleep or lie down.
- Breathe plenty of fresh air — take advantage of air vents, windows and open decks.
- Don’t smoke or sit near smokers.
- Don’t overeat. Avoid spicy foods and alcohol. Dry crackers and carbonated beverages may help settle your stomach.
- Don’t read.
- Ask your health care provider about over-the-counter medications, such as dimenhydrinate (Dramamine), or the prescription medication scopolamine (Transderm Scop). Natural remedies, such as ginger chews or ginger tea, may help with some symptoms.

Constipation

It’s not unusual for your digestive system to get out of balance while you travel. Sometimes, this results from holding the bowel movement in rather than negotiating a cramped airplane bathroom unit. It may also be associated with other factors related to travel, such as dehydration and lack of physical activity. To prevent or treat constipation:
- Don’t delay when nature calls – particularly after meals.
- Drink plenty of fluids.
- Eat plenty of high-fiber foods such as fruits, vegetables (fully cooked) and whole-grain cereals and breads.
- Try to stay active. Regular activity stimulates normal bowel movements.
- Consider using over-the-counter stool softeners (docusate sodium). If you develop mild constipation, milk of magnesia or prune juice may help.

Significant constipation occasionally demands stronger medications and perhaps suppositories. Before using these on a regular basis, seek your health care provider’s advice. Also inform your health care provider if constipation persists after returning from your trip.

Ear pain and head colds

Air travel probably doesn’t make a cold worse. But landing with a cold can cause severe ear pain. The problem stems from changes in air pressure. When you have a cold, the eustachian tube that connects your throat and middle ear is often blocked. Normally, an open tube equalizes air pressure in your ear but the blockage creates a vacuum, building painful pressure on your eardrum.

To help keep the eustachian tube open and prevent ear pain when you fly with a cold, take an oral decongestant at least one hour before landing or use a decongestant nasal spray before the descent begins. Additionally, to avoid ear popping or “typical” ear pain during take-off or landing, chew gum, suck on hard candy, yawn or sip liquids.
Food and water safety

The choices you make for food and drink are absolutely critical for keeping you healthy while you travel. Food and drinking water can be contaminated with disease-causing bacteria or viruses, especially in developing countries. Accidental exposure to germs also can occur while you are swimming or when you are showering and brushing your teeth. The environment may be filled with organisms that are harmful to a traveler but are often not harmful to the locals. You need to be sensitive in what you say about food and water that your hosts are providing. Make sure you stay safe without sounding overtly critical or dismissive.

Practice safe eating habits

Select food with care in areas where hygiene and sanitation are poor. This means:

- Avoiding uncooked vegetables, fruits and salads. The raw produce might look clean but may have been rinsed in contaminated water.
- Avoiding fruits that don’t have a thick rind that you personally peel with your own hands.
- Eating food that is freshly prepared and still hot at the time of consumption. Any food that has been allowed to stand for several hours is a breeding ground for new bacteria or is at risk of recontamination from improper handling. This can happen at restaurant buffets as easily as open markets or with street vendors.
- Avoiding unpasteurized dairy products, including cheeses and creamy dressings.
- Making sure that eggs, meat, fish and shellfish are fully cooked.

Be careful with drinking water

In areas where chlorinated water is unavailable or hygiene and sanitation are substandard, drink beverages made with boiled water, such as coffee and tea, or beverages in unopened cans or bottles, such as water, carbonated mineral water, soft drinks, beer and wine. Make sure you open the can or bottle yourself. Other important safety measures include:

- Avoiding ice cubes, since they may be made with contaminated water.
- Drinking directly from a can or bottle instead of a questionably contaminated glass. Be sure to dry wet cans or bottles before opening them and wipe clean any surface that comes in direct contact with your mouth.
- Boil water to make it safe to drink. Bring water to a boil for about 10 minutes and then allow it to cool. Pour the water out of the container rather than dipping into it.
- Using bottled water or boiled water for brushing your teeth. Keep your mouth closed in the shower and while swimming.
- Exercising caution when following the habits of the country’s residents. Keep in mind that they may be used to the drinking water, but it could still make you sick.

Traveler’s diarrhea

The usual culprit of traveler’s diarrhea is contaminated food and water, but excitement, anxiety, jet lag and lack of rest may make the problem worse. How ill you become depends on the type of organism, the amount of exposure, your age and your health. In addition to frequent loose stools, signs and symptoms may also include nausea, fever and stomach pain.

Diarrhea strikes suddenly and often lasts several days. The symptoms can make your life miserable, but diarrhea usually goes away on its own and is rarely life-threatening. Most cases of diarrhea don’t require treatment other than replacing lost fluids, which you can do with canned fruit juices, hot tea (not made with tap water) and carbonated beverages. See a doctor if you experience bloody diarrhea, persistent vomiting or a temperature greater than 101 F.
Outdoor safety

Sometimes, you’re so busy enjoying the outdoors that you forget about (or ignore) damage that the elements can cause on your health. Simple precautions can usually reduce your risk.

Treating sunburn

Harmful ultraviolet (UV) radiation from the sun can damage your skin. Without proper protection, too much exposure may result in nasty sunburn and increase your risk of skin cancer. Play it safe and take the following precautions:

- Limit exposure to sun. Reduce time spent outdoors when the sunlight is strongest, usually between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. Know that UV light reflected from water, sand, snow and cement can be as intense as direct sunlight. Clouds may block bright sunshine but still allow up to 80 percent of UV radiation to reach your skin.
- Wear protective clothing and sunglasses. Loose, long-sleeved cotton shirts and hats with at least a 4-inch brim offer good protection. Sunglasses should have at least 99 percent protection against both ultraviolet A (UVA) and ultraviolet B (UVB) sunlight. Wearing sunglasses is particularly important when you’re around water and snow.
- Use sunscreen. Liberally apply sunscreen with a sun protection factor (SPF) of 30 or higher about 30 minutes before you go outdoors, whether it’s sunny or cloudy. Be especially careful around sand and snow, which are highly reflective elements. Use water-resistant sun screens and reapply every two to three hours — more often if you’re swimming or sweating.
- Talk to your health care provider about the medications you take. Many drugs can increase your sensitivity to sunlight, causing redness, itching, swelling and blisters.

Symptoms of sunburn, including pain, redness and swelling, usually appear within a few hours after exposure. Sunburn may be treated with an over-the-counter pain reliever. A cool bath or shower also provides relief. See a doctor if your sunburn is accompanied by fever, blisters and intense itching or rash.

Addressing temperature-related concerns

Being active in hot weather puts extra stress on your heart and lungs. Be aware of the symptoms of heat exhaustion, which include high body temperatures, faintness, nausea and cold, clammy skin. At the first sign of these symptoms, get out of the sun and rest in the shade or an air-conditioned building. Lie down and elevate your feet slightly. Drink cold water or an electrolyte-containing beverage. To prevent heat-related illness in warm climates:

- Pace yourself. Go slow in the first few days of your visit, if the temperatures are high.
- Take regular breaks in shade during the day.
- Don’t overeat.
- Regularly drink liquids such as water or fruit juice before you feel thirsty.

If travel takes you to colder climates, remember to use sunscreen, as sunburn is possible even if you’re cold.

Preventing altitude sickness

Low oxygen levels at higher altitudes (above 8,000 feet) can cause altitude sickness. Symptoms include headache, shortness of breath, fatigue, nausea, dizziness and disturbed sleep. More serious symptoms include coughing, confusion and trouble walking — if you experience severe symptoms, go to a lower altitude immediately and seek medical attention.

To help avoid altitude sickness:

- Ascend slowly. If possible, begin at an altitude below 6,000 feet. Reduce your pace or take a break whenever you feel out of breath or tired.
- Allow time for your body to adjust. Rest for a day after arriving in higher elevations to help you get used to the altitude.
- Limit your ascent in higher elevations. Once you reach 8,000 feet, don’t plan climbing more than about 1,000 feet a day.
- Consider medication help. Ask your health care provider about acetazolamide (Diamox) or other prescription medications that may help prevent or lessen symptoms.
Avoiding animal-related dangers

Attitudes in other countries towards animals and household pets may be different from the US; in some nations, household pets may not have had the same vaccinations as in the US. Educate yourself about the risks that accompany interactions with animals, and exercise caution when handling any wildlife.

Enjoy yourself

Many travelers set an exhilarating — and unsustainable — pace in the first few days of their visit. With the unrealistic expectations that often accompany trip planning, people are determined to squeeze the most out of every second of every day.

Very often, this frenetic pace is beyond what you’re physically able to do. Add to that the mental fatigue of being in a new environment and using a new language, where simple tasks such as catching a bus or buying groceries can be difficult and time-consuming. There’s also the challenge of adjusting your schedule to unforeseen disruptions. Take precautions to prevent anxiety, burnout and exhaustion.

Reduce stress

A travel delay or turn of bad weather can cause stress. And stress may trigger a variety of health-related problems, such as headache, indigestion, insomnia, irritability, hypersensitivity and depression. Stress can also aggravate chronic problems, such as asthma, arthritis, digestive disorders and muscle pain.

Deal with stress by developing your coping skills. Learn to be more tolerant of yourself and of situations over which you have little control. Focus on the things you can control, like having appropriate clothing ready for bad weather. Accept that an unforeseen change of plans is always possible when you travel. Learn to decompress when your body needs downtime. Relaxation can slow your breathing rate and heart rate, reduce muscle tension, and ease anxiety and frustration.

Get enough sleep

The excitement of travel often interferes with a good night’s sleep. Not sleeping well reduces your ability to deal with stress, resulting in fatigue and a greater risk of accidents. Disrupted sleep may also weaken your immune system, leaving you more susceptible to illness. If you’re having problems getting enough sleep, try these tips:

- Take time to unwind. Slow the pace of your activities several hours before bedtime. Try to maintain a sleep routine that’s similar to what you practice at home.
- Don’t try to sleep when you aren’t drowsy. Many times, the harder you try to sleep, the more awake you’ll become. Stay up until you feel drowsy — for example, read or watch TV — and then return to bed.
- Avoid or limit caffeine, nicotine and alcohol. Caffeine and nicotine are stimulants that may interfere with your ability to fall asleep. Alcohol may help you doze off but can frequently cause you to wake up during the night.
- Create a comfortable sleeping environment. Try to keep your bedroom dark, quiet and cool. Earplugs and eye shades may help block outside noise and bright lights.
Traveling with special needs

If you have a chronic health condition or physical disability, make sure that you discuss the issue in relation to your travel plans with a health care provider, as well as with the Off-Campus Studies Director and your program Faculty Director.

Here are some helpful tips for specific conditions:

- **Food allergies and intolerances.** Learn what you can about the local cuisine to know what you’ll be facing — whether because of a food ingredient you’ll need to avoid for medical reasons or because you’re following a special diet. Try to recognize the names of specific foods or ingredients you wish to avoid (or request) in the native language. A translated language card for your specific dietary needs is handy for showing to a chef or cook (have multiple copies ready). For some destinations, negotiating the cuisine may be intimidating. Then again, with good preparation and a positive attitude, you may be surprised by the accommodations you’ll receive. Speak with your program director to formulate a strategy for how to negotiate dietary particularities. Special food requests should not prevent you from traveling and enjoying the cross-cultural experience. Keep in mind, though, that continuing a vegetarian diet is near impossible in some countries, so be flexible and understand that you may have to give that up in order to have a successful experience abroad.

- **Back pain.** If you normally don’t do stretching exercises for your back, start a conditioning routine two to three weeks before your trip. Continue the routine as you travel. Ask for assistance when lifting luggage to an overhead bin, or if you must do the lifting, do so in stages rather than a single lift. Use a pillow or rolled-up blanket to support your lower back during prolonged sitting. If flying, request an aisle seat so that you can stretch more easily.

- **Diabetes.** Carry medical identification with you and bring extra supplies and medications in case of scheduling changes. Major airlines allow you to put these supplies in carry-on bags as long as the medication has a pharmacy label. Before leaving, talk with your health care provider about the appropriate timing for taking your insulin as you cross time zones. Carry snacks with you as an emergency sugar source. In addition, pack two pairs of good walking shoes, and always check your feet at the end of the day for blisters. As much as possible, try to follow your daily walking and eating regimens.

- **Respiratory illnesses.** If you have asthma, carry extra inhalers in your carry-on and checked bags. If you have chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), such as emphysema, and need oxygen, call the airline ahead of time to arrange for an oxygen supply on the flight. Present your health care provider’s statement at the time of check in, dated within 10 days of your departure. Drink plenty of liquids during the flight.

After your return

Just because you’re back home does not mean your travel experience is complete. If you have acquired a viral, bacterial or parasitic infection overseas, you’ll typically become ill within six weeks. Some diseases, such as malaria, may not cause symptoms until six months to a year following the infection. Consider scheduling a medical exam after your return if:

- You experience signs and symptoms such as fever, diarrhea, vomiting, jaundice or skin rash
- You know you’ve been exposed to an infectious disease during your trip
- You’ve spent more than three months in a developing country

Be sure to inform your health care provider of the countries you’ve visited in the preceding year. If the illness persists, consider consulting a doctor who specializes in travel and tropical medicine.
**Special diets when you travel**

**Celiac disease**
- National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases
  http://celiac.nih.gov/TravelingWithCeliac.aspx
- Celiac Travel
  http://www.celiactravel.com/
  (For restaurant cards in different languages: http://www.celiactravel.com/cards/)
- Coeliac UK
  A website devoted to living with celiac disease in the United Kingdom
  http://www.coeliac.org.uk/

**Diabetes**
- American Diabetes Association
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
  http://www.cdc.gov/features/diabetesandtravel/
- National Diabetes Education Program
  Staying Healthy On-the-Go with Diabetes Video

**Inflammatory bowel disease**
*(Crohn’s disease and Colitis)*
- Crohn’s & Colitis Foundation of America
  http://www.ccfa.org/resources/traveling-with-ibd.html
- Crohn’s & Me

**Kosher diet**
- Kashrut.com
  http://www.kashrut.com/travel/
- Shamash Kosher Restaurant Database
  http://www.shamash.org/kosher/
- A kosher entry from the Amateur Traveler blog:
  http://amateurtraveler.com/kosher-travel/

**Vegetarian diet**
- “Ways to be a respectful vegetarian abroad”

**Readjustment**
Returning home after extended travel may produce unexpected emotional stress. During your trip, you may have felt challenged, stimulated and special, and now you may be reluctant to let go of the experience. Home may seem routine, dull and demanding. Your relationships with friends may have changed. You may be frustrated by an inability to communicate the first-hand excitement of your experience. This may lead to a “reverse home-sickness,” which includes feelings of alienation, isolation and depression.

Give yourself time to readjust to your “normal” life. The stimulus of the trip may have given you a new perspective on familiar behaviors that can seem strange or unsettling. Learn to balance these insights with the positive aspects of your former lifestyle. Just as you kept an open mind while you traveled, avoid being judgmental and overly critical when you return home. Try finding support from other former travelers who may have had to work through similar feelings.

**Travel Information Resources**

Helpful organizations for your trip planning:
- **CISI**
  855-303-8120
  claimhelp@culturalinsurance.com
- **AXA Assistance**
  855-327-1411
  medassist-usa@axa-assistance.us
- Carleton College Policy # for CISI/AXA is NO6566339
- **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention**
  Travelers’ Health
  800-232-4636
  www.cdc.gov/travel
- **Int’l Association for Medical Assistance to Travellers**
  716-754-4883
  www.iamat.org
- **International Society of Travel Medicine**
  404-373-8282
  www.istm.org
- **Transportation Security Administration**
  Traveler Information
  866-289-9673
  www.tsa.gov/traveler-information
- **U.S. Department of State / Bureau of Consular Affairs**
  www.travel.state.gov
- **World Health Organization**
  www.who.int