

## Travel Health Preparation Guide

This guide is designed to help you identify and plan for your health and wellbeing during travel, with a particular focus on how health conditions or disabilities that are managed in the U.S. health-care context may change or be more challenging in an off-campus or international setting.

Whether you are traveling domestically or abroad, answering the questions in this guide will assist you in proactively addressing potential health challenges such as securing appropriate on-site treatment services, obtaining prescription and over-the-counter medications, understanding controlled substance regulations from state to state or in foreign countries, researching customs requirements for medications and/or medical devices, and preparing for emergencies.

### Student Instructions:

- ☐ Answer the questions within this guide.
- ☐ Research strategies to manage your health in your specific travel destination/s.
- ☐ Consult with your current psychological and/or physical health care provider or University Health Service/Counseling (UHS) and Psychological Services (CAPS) professional. If needed, work together to develop a self-care plan for your off-campus experience. Please make appointments at CAPS or UHS as early as possible since they fill up quickly during peak travel periods.
- ☐ Keep an electronic or printed copy of your completed guide with you during travel for easy reference.
- ☐ Disclose health conditions to a travel companion, onsite staff member, or program leader (if applicable) if it will make you feel safer or help you in case of emergency. Common examples include sharing information about emergency medications or life-threatening allergic reactions.

### Additional requirements for students accepted to U-M managed international experiences:

Participants who have been under a health care provider or specialist's care for an ongoing/recurrent medical or psychological condition within the last 5 years will be required to develop a self-care plan with a professional health care provider (e.g., private physician, counselor, University health Services (UHS), Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS), etc.).

U-M personnel will not collect or review self-care plans, but all participants are encouraged to self-disclose relevant health information, medications, allergies, and/or food preferences to program leaders, on-site staff members, or other appropriate individuals to assist with emergencies or appropriate accommodations.

### What is a self-care plan?

A self-care plan is a set of strategies to manage your health and wellbeing and to minimize the potential that health issues become a barrier to your learning experience. The self-care plan helps you catalog, reflect upon, and plan for your physical and psychological health needs. This is especially important while living and working in a foreign environment, where available resources or stressors may differ.

**Consider the following questions about your health and wellbeing:**

1. **Everyone is impacted by travel.** In terms of your emotional wellbeing, these questions can help you prepare: What are you expecting to do during your trip? What are you expecting to learn and how might the travel experience change you? What are you most excited about? What are you most anxious/fearful about? What experiences may be most challenging for you (e.g., culture, interpersonal situations, etc.)?
2. **Physical Health.** Are you currently being treated, or have you been treated for a serious physical health condition injury or disease within the last five years? If yes, what do you do in the U.S. to care for these conditions (e.g., medication, seeing a health professional, personal networks, other strategies)? Do you need a prescription for medications that you might take during a flare and will you be able to replicate this treatment while traveling?
3. **Physical Health Needs During Travel.** What do you need in order to successfully manage your physical health conditions during your travel experience? What concrete steps will you take to address these needs? Do you need to consult with a health care professional or take medications at your destination?
4. **Mental Health.** Are you currently being treated, or have you been treated during the last 5 years for a mental health condition (e.g., addiction, depression, anxiety, eating disorder, a condition related to loss or grief)? If yes, what do you do on campus to care for these conditions (e.g. medication, seeing a health professional, personal networks, other strategies)?
5. **Mental Health Needs During Travel.** What do you need in order to successfully manage your mental health and wellbeing during your travel experience? What concrete steps will you take to address these needs? Do you need to consult with a mental health professional at your destination? How would this condition be treated during an acute flair and will you be able to replicate this treatment while traveling?
6. **Allergies.** Do you have any drug, food, or other allergies (e.g., medications, nuts, shellfish, bee stings, wool, etc.)? If yes, what are your reactions if exposed? How likely will it be to encounter these allergies in your host location? What steps will you take to minimize the risk of exposure and/or plan for treatment?
7. **Dietary Needs.** Make a list of any dietary restrictions you may have (e.g., vegan, vegetarian, kosher, no pork, etc.). How will you accommodate these restrictions during travel? Will your main sources of nutrition be available in your host location? Are there any items you should plan to carry with you?
8. **Medications.** Make a list of any prescription and over-the-counter medications you are currently taking (e.g., birth control, insulin for diabetes, Claritin for outdoor allergies). Next indicate which ones you will need during travel and in what amounts. Are these medications available in your host location/country? Are there any legal restrictions? What are the translations for each medication in your destination language and local brand name?

For international travelers, the following resources can assist you in determining the legality or availability of your medications abroad:

- Call the Embassy or consulate of each country you will be visiting to determine if your medications can be safely brought into the country.
- Contact an HTH GeoBlue advisor to determine if a particular medication is available in the destination/s. Please note that it is possible that a medication is available in a country, but it may be illegal to bring the medication through customs. Also, travelers will need their HTH certificate number found on their HTH care when calling an HTH advisor. The number for HTH GeoBlue is: +1.844.268.2686 (toll-free inside the U.S.) and +1.610.263.2847 (outside the U.S.)
- Search for your medications on the HTH GeoBlue Students Drug Equivalents Guide: <https://members.geobluestudents.com/TranslationTools/DrugEquivalents>

9. **Immunizations and Prophylaxis.** Do you have the following?

- Copy of your own immunization record to carry in case of health emergency.
- List of required and recommended immunizations and prophylaxis for your host location(s). For general recommendations, look up your destination(s) on the [Center for Disease Control and Prevention Travel Website](#).
- If you do not have these items, how will you locate them and arrange for any boosters or new immunizations needed prior to departure? You can also set up an appointment at UHS by following the steps listed on the [UHS Travel Health Services page](#).

10. **Language.** Are you traveling to a destination where English is not the primary language? Do you speak the local language? If not, what strategies will you use to explain your health care needs? If needed, have you identified health care facilities where English-speaking professionals are available? Note: Medical facilities affiliated with HTH/GeoBlue that have English-speaking staff are listed on their [website](#).

11. **Accommodations.** Do you have any conditions that may require special accommodations during travel (e.g., mobility or physical activity restrictions, learning disabilities, hearing or visual loss, etc.)?

If yes, what accommodations or support services do you receive on campus? Will these accommodations be needed during travel? Are they available in your host location? What steps will you take to research your options?

Note: Students are responsible for securing appropriate accommodations for any disabilities. If you are not already registered with the Office for Services for Students with Disabilities, please do so via their [registration page](#). Consider scheduling a meeting with your disability coordinator to discuss the best ways to accommodate your disabilities while participating in your off-campus experience.

### **U-M Travel Abroad Health Insurance:**

For international travel, once you have your HTH/GeoBlue insurance card or policy number, please visit the HTH/GeoBlue website to locate medical facilities and doctors in your travel destination/s. You will also be able to call an HTH/GeoBlue Advisor to set up any appointments even before you travel.

HTH/GeoBlue Website:

[https://www.hthstudents.com/login/entry.cfm?script\\_name=/doctor\\_search/by\\_location.cfm](https://www.hthstudents.com/login/entry.cfm?script_name=/doctor_search/by_location.cfm)

HTH/GeoBlue Mobile App: <https://www.geo-blue.com/mobileapp/>

HTH/GeoBlue Advisor Phone: +1.610.254.8771

### Health Care Provider Information:

Having this information in one place can be helpful when seeking health care or emergency care during travel.

- ☐ Health Care Provider Name. List the name of your regular health care provider (personal physician, group practice, etc.).
- ☐ Health Care Provider Office Contact Information. List the office phone number and email address for your regular health care provider.
- ☐ Health Care Provider Emergency Contact. List the after-hours emergency number for your health care provider.

### Additional Planning Questions:

- ☐ What are your greatest challenges in taking care of your health on campus?
- ☐ What do you anticipate will be the most challenging aspect of taking care of your health while traveling?
- ☐ What questions do you still need to research about your particular travel health care needs?
- ☐ Are there any particular psychological or physical health concerns that are so serious that you may not be able to manage them during travel? If so, is it better to:
  - A. Travel to another destination for another experience where you will be better able to manage your health and wellbeing.
  - B. Postpone your travel to another time when you are better able to manage your health and wellbeing.
  - C. Implement strategies and utilize on-site resources that will better enable you to manage your health and wellbeing at your intended destination.
- ☐ To better manage your health while traveling, who should you disclose your health information to? A classmate, a program leader, on-site staff at your destination, or others?
- ☐ Is your travel affiliated with a U-M department? If so, U-M administrators are also available to connect you with resources and support you as you develop your self-care plan.



**GLOBAL ENGAGEMENT**  
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

## Travel Health Preparation Guide

Visit [global.umich.edu](https://global.umich.edu) to find more health and safety resources.