



HEALTH

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UCEAP Health Requirements

The UCEAP Health Clearance is a requirement for participation

You are responsible for getting this form to the UCEAP Systemwide Office by the deadline. You will be withdrawn from UCEAP if you do not complete the health clearance.

Inform UCEAP of any recent medical or special needs and/or if any changes in health occur after the health clearance and before your departure. You will be required to get a second clearance should your health history change since the date of the initial clearance.

UCEAP requires an online travel health education certification course for some countries

Most travelers are unaware or unprepared for the health-related risks of international travel. If required for your host country, the UCEAP online travel health education course will help you increase your health awareness, prevent illnesses, and promote healthier travel. This course does not replace an in-person appointment with a travel health provider for necessary medications and immunizations.

Consider vaccine-preventable diseases that may be easily contracted during travel, especially if you have a preexisting medical condition.

Plan ahead. If you are covered through UC-SHIP, some travel vaccines may be covered if you get them while eligible through UC-SHIP. UCEAP insurance does not cover travel vaccines.

Your medical information

All information which is collected about you will be kept strictly confidential.

Prevention

Planning and awareness will decrease health risks while traveling

Learn about travel health risks through the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Destinations page and choose the country or countries you will be visiting. Check for “Travel Notices in Effect” for your destination.

Discuss your travel plans and any physical or psychological condition that could increase your health risk with the health professional doing your UCEAP Health Clearance.

International travel can pose various risks to health, depending on the destination and your particular medical history. You may encounter sudden and significant changes in altitude, air pollution, humidity, microbes, and temperatures, which can result in illness. Risk increases and serious health complications could happen in areas where hygiene and sanitation are inadequate, medical services are not well developed, and clean water is scarce.

Forward planning, appropriate preventive measures, and careful precautions can substantially reduce the risks of adverse health consequences.

Pay attention to your health and protect against illness

Gastrointestinal disorders, sore throats, and colds often occur more frequently in a foreign country than at home, particularly soon after arrival. This is due to a new climate, environment, diet and water, and personal habits.

Even with good travel advice, vaccines, and medications, you are not 100 percent protected against all diseases or injuries. Healthy personal behaviors, such as being careful about food and water, protecting against insect and mosquito bites, and washing hands frequently, are important ways to prevent many common travel illnesses.

Mass gatherings and your health and security

Mass gatherings ranging from major sports events to fairs, festivals, concerts, or even political rallies may pose special risks for travelers; large numbers of people in small areas can facilitate



the spread of infectious diseases or increase the risk of injury (e.g., catastrophic stampedes, collapse of venues, crowd violence and damage to political and commercial infrastructure).

Events with large numbers of international participants tend to have increased risk of infectious disease outbreaks. This is in part related to varying endemic diseases in host and home countries and different levels of vaccinations in those locations. The longer an event lasts, the more likely that stresses to facilities, organizers, and participants will be observed.

The most common health problems reported at mass gatherings are injuries, respiratory and cardiac issues, heat-related illness, alcohol or drug effects, and gastrointestinal illnesses.

Tips:

- Knowledge of the country or region being visited is essential.
- Be aware of the most likely health risks associated with the event you are attending and what you can do to stay healthy and safe.
- Avoid gatherings where drug and alcohol use could contribute to dangerous behavior, where political or religious fervor may contribute to violence, or where inadequate facilities may contribute to an unhealthy environment.
- Avoid densely congested areas with limited exits. Wherever you are, make sure you always know how to get out.
- Be aware of emergency precautions and the location of exit routes from the venue and where medical facilities are located.
- If you find yourself in the middle of a moving crowd do not fight against the pressure, do not stand still or sit down, because you could easily get trampled. Move in the same direction of the crowd; take advantage of any space that may open up to move sideways to the crowd movement where the flow is weaker.

Coping with preexisting medical conditions

Living and studying in a foreign environment may cause unexpected physical and emotional stress, which can exacerbate some chronic health conditions. For example, if you have diabetes, travel and different nutrition can make it hard to keep your blood sugar within your target range because of changes in time zones, meal schedules, and types of foods available. Check your blood sugar level more often when you are away from home.

If your immune system is weakened from a disease such as HIV/AIDS, cancer, or from chemotherapy or medicines, talk to your doctor about your travel plans in detail. There may be added risks related to travel. If you get sick while traveling, your illness may be more severe or you may have added complications to your existing condition. UCEAP countries where hygiene and sanitation, medical care, and water quality are of a high standard pose relatively less risks for your health. In contrast, UCEAP countries where hygiene, sanitation, and medical services are below standards, and clean water is unavailable may pose serious health risks; therefore, it is important to follow health precautions before, during, and after the journey.

Allergies

Research and plan your trip thoroughly in consultation with your doctor. An allergic reaction can occur within minutes or up to hours upon exposure and it could compromise your education abroad experience.

What Is Anaphylaxis?

Anaphylaxis is the term doctors use to describe a serious allergic reaction. It can happen very quickly and can cause death.

Anaphylaxis symptoms usually occur within minutes of exposure to an allergen. Sometimes, however, anaphylaxis can occur a half-hour or longer after exposure.



Common anaphylaxis triggers include:

- Certain medications, especially penicillin
- Foods, such as peanuts, tree nuts (walnuts, pecans, almonds, cashews), wheat, fish, shellfish, milk and eggs
- Insect stings from bees, yellow jackets, wasps, hornets, and fire ants

Less common causes of anaphylaxis include:

- Latex
- Medications used in anesthesia
- Exercise

Other triggers can also cause anaphylaxis. You might know if you are allergic to something, but you can also have anaphylaxis even if you do not know you have an allergy.

What are the Symptoms of Anaphylaxis?

Anaphylaxis can involve one or more parts of the body. The most common symptoms are:

- Hives—raised, red patches of skin that are very itchy
- Angioedema—a condition that causes puffiness, usually of the face, eyelids, ears, mouth, hands, or feet

Other symptoms can include:

- Redness or itching of the skin (without hives)
- Swelling or itching of the eyes
- Runny nose or swelling of the tongue
- Trouble breathing, wheezing, or a change in your voice
- Vomiting or diarrhea
- Feeling dizzy or passing out

With anaphylaxis, you can get very sick, very quickly. Your symptoms can also change. You may first get hives on your skin. Soon after that, you may throw up or have trouble breathing. **Each time you have anaphylaxis, you can have different symptoms. Symptoms also differ from person to person.**

The symptoms you have with anaphylaxis can be worse if you have:

- Asthma
- Other health problems such as lung or heart disease

Should I Seek Medical Help?

Yes. If you think you have anaphylaxis, call local emergency services and/or the UCEAP Study Center (use the after-hours emergency number). Do not try to get yourself to the hospital. Anaphylaxis can lead to death.

How is Anaphylaxis Treated?

At the hospital, you will get treatment to stop the anaphylaxis and reduce your symptoms. Health practitioners will also watch you to make sure your symptoms do not get worse.

People who have had anaphylaxis before often get a prescription for an auto-injector (e.g., the EpiPen®). This device carries one or two shots of a medicine called epinephrine. This medicine can help stop anaphylaxis. The auto-injector makes it easy for you to give yourself the shot. If you have an auto-injector, keep it with you at all times and use it right away any time you think you are having anaphylaxis.



If you have had anaphylaxis, you should talk with your doctor or nurse **before departure**. If needed, your doctor can do tests to find out what you are allergic to. Your doctor can help you make a plan to prevent future anaphylaxis.

As part of your plan, you can:

- Learn anaphylaxis symptoms so you will know when to get help
- Have an epinephrine auto-injector with you at all times
- Avoid foods (peanuts, eggs, shellfish, wheat, etc.), medicines (penicillin, codeine, etc.), or insects (bee stings, etc.) you are allergic to

What if I am Allergic to Penicillin?

Penicillin is a common medicine doctors use to treat infections. If you are allergic to penicillin, you can have anaphylaxis if you take it. Do not take any type of penicillin medicine. Other people who think they have a penicillin allergy might be able to take it without a problem. If you have been told you are allergic to penicillin, talk to your doctor.

Tips:

- Think about your destination. What allergens and irritants are common where you will be living and studying? Contact your UCEAP Operations Specialist immediately.
- Talk to your doctor before departure and discuss your UCEAP destination.
- Know the differences between life-threatening food allergy and food intolerance.
- Wear a medical bracelet and/or pendant (www.medicalert.com) and carry a laminated card—in English and in the local language—with a warning about your allergy, to let others know.
- Consider packing an allergy translation card to help you communicate in the local language.
- If you have severe allergies or asthma, visit your allergist before traveling to discuss your plans.
- Take all the precautions necessary to ensure your study abroad experience will be successful.

Identify medical services and resources abroad

Identify host country health care resources before your trip in case of a medical emergency. This is especially important if you have a preexisting medical condition. Information about local medical care may be provided after arrival during your UCEAP on-site orientation. You can also contact the UCEAP 24/7 travel assistance provider, Europ Assistance, at 1+866-451-7606; e-mail: ops@europassistance-usa.com

Know what to do during a health emergency

You never know when and where an emergency will occur. Keep contact information (phone numbers and addresses) of local services you may need and/or people you need to contact. UCEAP representatives (both in California and abroad) and local liaison officers are prepared and experienced to respond in the unlikely event of an emergency situation that could impact the program. They can also help you during a personal emergency if you need advice in finding a doctor or counselor, or need a refill of your prescription. If you are not feeling well, contact the Study Center faculty/staff. If you are away from the UCEAP Study Center, contact the UCEAP 24/7 travel assistance provider, Europ Assistance at ops@europassistance-usa.com or call collect the UC dedicated line at 1+202-828-5896. Ask how to make a collect call from your host country.



Health Risks: General Considerations

Influenza (flu) vaccine

The UCEAP physician consultant strongly encourages a flu vaccine before departure, particularly if you have a chronic medical condition (e.g., asthma, diabetes). Influenza is one of the most common ailments reported by UCEAP students.

Sexually transmitted diseases

Sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) are infections that are spread primarily through person-to-person sexual contact. There are more than 30 different sexually transmissible bacteria, viruses, and parasites. The most common conditions they cause are gonorrhea, chlamydial infection, syphilis, trichomoniasis, chancroid, genital herpes, genital warts, human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) infection, and hepatitis B infection. STDs are the main preventable cause of infertility, particularly in women. Many countries have been unsuccessful in adequately controlling STDs. Lack of adequate precaution (e.g., engaging in unprotected sex) in situations where there is a risk of contracting a sexually transmitted disease could lead to serious problems.

The surest way to avoid transmission of STDs is to abstain from sexual contact. In addition, consistent and correct use of latex male condoms can reduce the risk of STDs.

Access the CDC [Sexually Transmitted Diseases](#) website for more information.

HIV/AIDS

AIDS is a chronic, life-threatening condition caused by the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV). By damaging your immune system, HIV interferes with your body's ability to fight off viruses, bacteria and fungi that cause disease. HIV makes you more susceptible to certain types of cancers and to infections your body would normally resist, such as pneumonia and meningitis. The virus and the infection itself are known as HIV. "Acquired immunodeficiency syndrome" (AIDS) is the name given to the later stages of an HIV infection. The infection occurs worldwide.

How HIV Is Transmitted

The ways in which HIV can be transmitted have been clearly identified, as follows: 1) sex, 2) infected blood, 3) needle sharing, 4) accidental needle sticks, 5) mother to child, and in rare cases, 6) through organ or tissue transplants or unsterilized dental or surgical equipment. To become infected with HIV, infected blood, semen, vaginal secretions, or breast milk must enter your body. One cannot become infected through ordinary contact (e.g., hugging, kissing, dancing, or shaking hands) with someone who has HIV or AIDS.

HIV/AIDS Prevention

There is no vaccine to prevent HIV infection and no cure for AIDS, but it is possible to protect yourself and others from infection by educating yourself about HIV and avoiding any behavior that allows HIV-infected fluids into your body. According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the most reliable ways to avoid becoming infected with or transmitting HIV are:

- Abstain from sexual intercourse (i.e., oral, vaginal, or anal sex). All partners should get tested for HIV and other sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) before initiating sexual intercourse. Having another STD increases by two to five times the likelihood a person will become infected with HIV and increases the likelihood an infected person will transmit HIV.
- If you choose to have sexual intercourse, practice safe sex. The proper and consistent use of latex or polyurethane (a type of plastic) condoms when engaging in sexual intercourse can greatly reduce a person's risk of acquiring or transmitting sexually transmitted diseases.
- Do not use or allow the use of contaminated, unsterilized syringes or needles for any purpose (drugs, electrolysis, tattooing, acupuncture, medical or dental procedures, etc.). Needles for blood tests or injections must be sterile, preferably disposable, and pre-packaged in a sealed container. If an injection is required, make sure the needles and syringes come straight from a sealed, sterilized package, or have been sterilized with



chemicals or boiled for 20 minutes. If in doubt, ask how the equipment has been sterilized. In some countries you can buy needles and syringes and take them to the hospital for your own use. Caution regarding instrument sterilization applies to all instruments that pierce the skin, including needles used for tattoos. If you are diabetic or require routine injections, bring a supply of syringes and needles sufficient for your entire stay abroad.

- Beware of infected blood, blood components, or locally-produced blood clotting factor concentrates and other blood products. Not all countries have mandatory HIV screening of donated blood. In some locales, ascertaining the availability of HIV-screened blood and blood products may be difficult. Not all countries have the resources to sterilize needles, and some countries reuse even disposable equipment. You can inquire at the local U.S. embassy, U.S. consulate, or Red Cross office about safe sources of blood. If an injury occurs and a blood transfusion is needed, the blood needs to be tested for HIV antibodies by trained laboratory technicians. Do not assume that blood you will receive has been screened.

If you are injured or become ill while abroad, consider delaying any procedures that may involve a blood transfusion unless it is absolutely necessary.

Abuse of alcohol and other drugs

Many students experiment with alcohol and other drugs when they are away from home, particularly when they are in a foreign country where they may be of legal drinking age.

Alcohol is a mind-altering drug, which affects physical coordination and decision making abilities. Alcohol is classified as a depressant because it slows down the central nervous system, causing a decrease in motor coordination, reaction time, and intellectual performance. At high doses, the respiratory system slows down drastically and can cause a coma or death. Acute alcohol poisoning can occur when someone drinks too much alcohol in a short time.

If you decide to drink while abroad, drink wisely. People who have been drinking are more at risk of being the victim, or perpetrator, of attacks, robberies, muggings, and sexual assaults. Stay in control of your drinking to minimize risky or difficulty situations. If you choose to consume alcohol know that you remain responsible for your actions at all times and that alcohol abuse is against UCEAP policy.

Substance abuse may result in serious health problems or even sudden death, which in the case of some drugs (e.g., cocaine) can occur after first-time use. In addition, students may face legal consequences for behavior they exhibit while under the influence of alcohol or other substances (e.g., arrest, fines, etc.).

Alcohol is the “drug of choice” in college. For some students, use of alcohol and other drugs is minimal or moderate, and may not cause them or others significant concern. However, a certain percentage of students study abroad with an existing alcohol or drug abuse problem. A widely agreed-upon definition of alcohol or drug abuse is when a person’s use interferes with his or her physical, social, or economic functioning.

Four Signs of Alcohol Poisoning

Watch out for your intoxicated friends. If any of your friends show even one sign of alcohol poisoning, as below, call emergency services.

- Unconscious or unable to be roused
- Cold, clammy, pale or bluish skin
- Slow or irregular breathing
- Vomiting repeatedly or uncontrollably

**How to Help:**

- Trust your instincts!
- Turn the person on their side to prevent choking while vomiting.
- Stay with the person. Do not leave them alone or let them “sleep it off.”
- Call the local emergency number, the UCEAP representative, and/or a hospital immediately. Do not hesitate to call for help.
- Stay calm.

Alcohol myths:

Myth: I can drink and still be in control.

Fact: Drinking alcohol impairs your judgment, which increases the likelihood that you will do something you will later regret such as having unprotected sex, date rape, damaging property, or being victimized by others.

Myth: I can sober up quickly if I have to.

Fact: It takes 2–3 hours to eliminate the alcohol content of two drinks, depending on your weight. Nothing can speed up this process—not even coffee or a cold shower.

Myth: I’d be better off if I learn to “hold my liquor.”

Fact: If you have to drink increasingly larger amounts of alcohol to get a buzz or get high, you are developing tolerance. This increases your vulnerability to many serious problems, including alcoholism.

Myth: Beer and wine do not have as much alcohol as hard liquor.

Fact: A 12-ounce bottle of beer in the U.S. has the same amount of alcohol as a standard shot of 80-proof liquor (either straight or in a mixed drink) or 5 ounces of wine. The alcohol content of beer varies by local practice or beer style.

Bed bugs

Bed bugs are found from North and South America, to Africa, Asia, and Europe, and they are currently spreading quickly in parts of the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom, and other parts of Europe. Bed bugs have been found in five-star hotels and resorts and their presence is not determined by the cleanliness of the living conditions where they are found.

Some simple preventive measures can be taken to minimize the possible impact on your travels and, more importantly, on your permanent accommodations when you return from your travels.

Travel Light

When traveling, pack only clothing and objects that can be washed or laundered in hot water, which is one easy way to kill any bed bugs. Traveling light also allows you to pack items and clothing into sealable plastic bags when not in use, further protecting against infestation.

Inspect Your Room

Regardless of how often a hotel/hostel claims to inspect rooms for bed bugs, it is always a good idea to check for signs of infestation upon check-in. Leave your luggage at the door, in the bathroom, or preferably on a luggage rack. Use a flashlight to inspect the room, paying extra attention to the room’s bed and furniture. Make sure to check under all four corners of the mattress and box spring, and in large upholstered furniture. If the headboard is of a manageable size and easy to look behind, check it too, but don’t risk damaging it or hurting yourself. Digested blood will be brown rather than red, and will dissolve when touched with a wet napkin or tissue, which is an easy way to differentiate it from lacquer or varnish. A basic inspection can be done in five to ten minutes.



Protect Your Bags

Store your luggage on a rack or in the bathroom, not on any upholstered furniture or under the bed. Keep clothing and other items sealed in your bags when not in use, rather than unpacking. Keep any electronic devices, toiletries, or other items that cannot be laundered or heated in air-tight plastic bags.

When you get home, immediately wash everything that can be laundered through a hot wash and hot dryer cycle. Dry cleaning is also effective. Luggage can be sterilized by using a steamer or the steam function on many household irons.

Sanitation/Prevention

It is a misconception to think that bed bugs are the result of poor sanitation and/or poverty. People usually bring bed bugs into their homes, in luggage or on clothes, after visiting an infested dwelling or hotel/hostel. It is much easier to control a population when the infestation is small. Be alert and keep clutter down to make it easier to inspect and bed bugs have fewer hiding places. If you travel frequently, and have just returned, watch for signs of bed bugs by checking under your sheets and inspecting your mattress, especially if you have been bitten. If you suspect bed bugs, act immediately, notify the local UCEAP staff/host institution and wash all your clothes in hot water immediately.

Bed bugs are not a medical or public health hazard as they do not spread disease. Bed bugs can be an annoyance because their presence may cause itching and loss of sleep. Itching may lead to excessive scratching that can sometimes increase the chance of a secondary skin infection.

Bite Symptoms

Not everyone reacts to bed bug bites in the same fashion. Some people have reactions that are delayed for several days or more while others do not react at all. Reactions to bites can also vary significantly between individuals from a mild itchy welt to a more severe rash like symptom. People often confuse itching bed bug welts for mosquito bites. The only way you really can confirm bed bugs are the cause is to find the bugs in your bed or bedroom. Often people are bitten when traveling, making diagnosis even more difficult.

The best way to treat a bite is to avoid scratching the area and apply antiseptic creams or lotions and take an antihistamine.

Do Not Overreact

If after your travels you have bites, don't scratch, take an antihistamine if you can, and conduct inspections in the weeks and months following your travel. For example, for several months upon returning from an overnight trip it is a good idea to periodically inspect (at least once every few weeks) your bed and upholstered furniture. Bed bugs often go undetected for several months until their populations become larger and they eventually emerge in areas where they are more easily detected.

If at any time you have reason to believe that you are experiencing a problem with bed bugs it is very important that you act swiftly and contact the Study Center and/or local UCEAP representative to conduct a thorough inspection and evaluate the situation. Bed bugs are extremely difficult to control especially if they are not caught during the early stages of the infestation.

If you have confirmed that you have bed bugs in your room, and it is not a result of previous traveling or guests, politely ask the Study Center and/or local UCEAP representative to move you to a room with no history of bed bugs. Remember, that a non-professional can easily find false positives, and a number of other harmless insects can be confused with bed bugs.



Medication & Supplies

Make sure your medications are legal abroad

Some prescription and over-the-counter medications that are commonly prescribed or sold in the U.S. may be considered illegal substances in other countries or may contain controlled substances.

When traveling abroad with medications, including prescription and over-the-counter, you must consider: 1) the law of the country you are in and 2) the law of the country or countries to which you are traveling.

Two months, or more before departure consult with your doctor. If you take any prescribed medication for depression, anxiety, bipolar disorder, ADD/ADHD, etc., your medication could be restricted/unlicensed or illegal in some countries. Europ Assistance, UCEAP's travel assistance provider, offers support with prescription replacements and refills, and can answer questions regarding the legality of prescription drugs abroad to the extent that their resources in the specific country will allow them. Call toll free 1+(866) 451-7606 (inside the U.S.) or collect 1+ (202) 828-5896 (from outside the U.S.).

Some U.S. FDA-approved medications have the same brand names as medications that are marketed outside the U.S. but contain completely different active ingredients. No international regulatory system exists to ensure that new brand names are sufficiently different from existing ones elsewhere in the world to prevent undue confusion by pharmacists who are filling prescriptions from outside their country.

You can also call the country's Consulate General Office for information.

Travel with an adequate supply of medications

Due to strict customs regulations, some countries may limit the amount of a particular prescription medication that you can transport in and out of the host country. It is important to check with Europ Assistance, UCEAP's travel assistance provider, about restrictions before departure. Call them at 1-866-451-7606 or e-mail at ops@europassistance-usa.com

Tips for traveling with medication

Keep medications in their original, labeled containers (rather than transferring them to travel containers).

Take a copy of your prescription with the names of the active ingredients (including brand and generic names) and a letter from your physician with your diagnosis, prescribed medications, and required dosage.

Pack your medication in your carry-on luggage; checked baggage can get lost. U.S. Transportation Security Administration (TSA) does not limit the amount or volume of these items you may bring in your carry-on baggage. **However**, if the medically necessary items are liquids or gels and exceed three ounces or are not contained in a one-quart, zip-top plastic bag, you must declare them to one of the TSA Security Officers at the checkpoint for further inspection. Non-liquid or gel medications of all kinds such as solid pills or inhalers are allowed through the security checkpoint once they have been screened. Read more on the [TSA website](#) and prepare.

Carry a medication/emergency card with your name, drug allergies, the name and contact information of your physician, exact names of the medications that you are currently taking, and an emergency contact. In addition, if you have significant allergies to medication, or a chronic medical condition, consider wearing a [Medic Alert medical ID](#).

Mailing medication abroad

Many countries have strict regulations (high customs duties), restrictions, or prohibition (medication confiscated) on having medications sent by mail, as not all U.S. medications are legal in other countries.



Filling a U.S. prescription abroad

The FDA (U.S. Federal Drug Administration) warns that medications abroad may contain different active ingredients, even though many are marketed under the same or similar-sounding brand names as in the U.S. The FDA also cautions that taking a drug containing a different active ingredient may not help your medical condition and could even be harmful. Sometimes a drug that has the same name may not be prescribed for the same illness as in the U.S.

According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), virtually any drug, including antibiotics and antimalarial medications, can be purchased without prescription in many developing countries. Do not buy these medications. The quality and safety of drugs purchased outside the United States cannot be guaranteed and may not meet U.S. standards and they may even be counterfeit or potentially hazardous because of contaminants. In fact, 36 percent of antimalarials abroad are counterfeit.

- ▶ **Before returning to the U.S., be aware that medications purchased abroad may not be FDA-approved or allowed into the U.S.**

Contraception

If you need contraception while abroad, it is best to bring it with you. Each country has a different policy regarding availability and dispensing of contraception.

Anti-Anxiety and anti-depression medicine

- ▶ **Never abruptly discontinue your medication.**
- ▶ **Compliance with prescribed medication regimens is important.**
- ▶ **Stopping treatment early—without consulting a doctor—can cause adverse reactions and/or relapse.**

For example, discontinuation effects are common after withdrawal of MAOIs and may include disorientation, confusion, agitation, cognitive impairment, catatonia, paranoid delusions, aggressiveness, hallucinations, depression, thoughts of suicide, slowed speech, and sleep disturbance. Researchers have found that suddenly stopping treatment with antidepressants known as SSRIs can cause serious withdrawal effects, both physically and psychologically. A physician may recommend gradually decreasing or tapering off the medication. Tapering off is particularly important with some medications to give your body an adjustment period.

Prescription eyewear

If you wear glasses or contact lenses, take an extra pair and your written prescription abroad. Take sufficient quantities of contact lens solution, since it may not be readily available or the product name may not be the same as in the U.S. For example, Optifree Express is called Optifree Multiaction Solution in Europe, and Renu is called All Care solution in China; the formulation may be different or you may be allergic to the ingredients. The manufacturer may not sell their entire line of products in certain countries. Also, in some countries you may need to see an optometrist, optician, or ophthalmologist to get contact lens solutions because they are considered drugs.

Information for students with diabetes

Diabetes management is important when traveling. Plan ahead to ensure that you have all the things you need.

The American Diabetes Association recommends that persons with diabetes or other persons who require routine or frequent injections should carry a supply of unused syringes and needles, when accompanied by insulin or other injectable medication, sufficient to last their stay abroad.

Pack a good supply of syringes; not all sizes are available abroad. However, be aware that carrying needles and syringes without a prescription may be illegal in some countries. Carry a letter from your physician indicating that the needles and syringes are necessary for your



physical well-being. If you use an insulin pump, carry additional refills. Ask your physician for a note on prescription pad or letterhead explaining that the pump is connected to a catheter under the skin and cannot be removed. When traveling by plane, request a visual inspection of your diabetic supplies and have the letter ready to be viewed by the agent at the security check.

At the airport, before departure from the U.S., notify the Transportation Security Administration Security Officer that you have diabetes and are carrying your supplies with you. For a list of supplies that are allowed on the plane after screening, visit the [TSA website](#).

Sample first-aid kit

Carry a medical kit for all destinations, especially for those where there may be significant and/or endemic health risks, such as developing countries and locations where the immediate availability of specific medications is uncertain. Include in your first-aid kit treatment for minor cuts and abrasions and something for temporary diarrhea, and a variety of bandages, medications, and equipment to stabilize injuries until proper medical attention can be administered. Obtain advice from your physician on assembling a suitable medical kit and visit the [CDC website](#) for a list of recommended items.



Psychological Health

Discuss and disclose conditions before departure

Study abroad can be a personally rewarding and culturally expanding experience, but it can also be somewhat stressful. Many college-age students experience anxiety, depression, stress, and other mental health conditions. In addition, existing mild physical or psychological disorders can be aggravated by the stresses of travel and life in an unfamiliar setting.

You are responsible for assessing (along with your parent/guardian and physician) any physical or mental health conditions that could be affected by studying abroad; there are certain conditions that may require continued therapy, monitoring, or specific support mechanisms while abroad. Talk to your doctor to discuss if the type of travel and your destination are appropriate for you. Get advice on how to stay healthy and how to communicate with one another while you are abroad; consider the time difference and methods (Skype, texting, e-mail, phone calls, etc.). Ask your doctor to adjust your medication dosage if crossing time zones.

When you disclose such conditions in advance of participation, UCEAP can help you to arrange appropriate accommodations abroad (if they are available).

To minimize a potential crisis abroad, familiarize yourself with the psychiatric healthcare system of your destination and identify a mental health professional whom you can contact immediately in case of an emergency. Work with UCEAP officials.

Social and cultural acceptance of mental health at your destination can determine the type of care you will receive.

While Abroad

- Give yourself plenty of time to arrive and go through safety checks. Inform TSA about your condition to make your trip less stressful.
- Establish a routine. Familiarize yourself with your surroundings and, if possible, integrate activities into your daily life that you enjoyed in the U.S.
- Know your mental and physical limits. Ask for help when you notice the first sign of distress.
- Re-assess your original plans and change them to minimize stress levels.
- Take your medication as prescribed. Do not reduce or stop the dosage without a doctor's approval.
- Know who to call if you feel distressed.



References and resources

The following are UC offices of counseling and psychological services:

UC Berkeley Counseling and Psychological Services 2222 Bancroft Way (510) 642-9494 TTY/TDD: (510) 642-2368	UC Riverside Counseling Center Veitch Student Center North Wing (951) 827-5531
UC Davis Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) 219 North Hall (530) 752-0871	UC San Diego Psychological and Counseling Services (P&CS) Galbraith Hall, Room 190 (858) 534-3758
UC Irvine Counseling Center Room 202 Student Services I (949) 824-4642	UC Santa Barbara Counseling Services (805) 893-4411
UC Los Angeles John Wooden Center West 221 Westwood Plaza (310) 825-0768	UC Santa Cruz Counseling and Psychological Services 1156 High Street (831) 459-2628
UC Merced Counseling Services Kolligian Library, First floor West Wing (209) 724-4266	

There are many valuable websites that address mental health topics and issues. Below are some useful resources for additional information about mental health.

- [National Eating Disorders Association](#)
- [The JED Foundation](#)
- [Mental Help Net](#)
- [Mental Health America \(MHA\)](#)
- [Outside the Classroom](#)
- [ULifeline](#) (free, anonymous website that links you to your college counseling center and a library of mental health information)