



## **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

Questions and answers to the most common questions about Medical Travel

### **Medical Travel**

#### **What is Medical Travel?**

Medical Travel is the process of traveling to an overseas or domestic destination to obtain medical treatments or health care.

#### **What are the advantages of Medical Travel?**

Health care globalization has opened access to borderless health solutions. State-of-the-art health care facilities in Asia, New Zealand Hawaii, and the continental United States offer cost-effective alternatives to health care at home. These boast comparable, if not better quality of treatment, and the following added benefits:

Greater control over decisions that affect one's health and medical care;

Shorter wait times for physician consultations, treatments and procedures;

Fluent, native expertise and on-the-ground Medical Referral Offices and travel-hospitality concierge resources in each destination that ensure safety and personalized attention;

The comfort, support and convenience of home;

Effective and efficient delivery of care due to higher nurse-to-patient ratios; and

A rewarding travel experience

#### **Why does medical care cost significantly less overseas?**

Most network providers are located in countries with lower labor costs and insurance costs, allowing them to lower overhead and consequently, the cost of health care. By no means an indication of lower quality standards, these network providers are well funded and managed, with internationally accredited facilities and procedures.

#### **Who benefits from medical travel?**

Patients who are interested in traveling for economical medical treatments; for immediate availability of procedures; for state-of-the-art treatments that may not be available where they live; or those seeking care for procedures not covered by their insurance benefits or have a high deductible stand to benefit the most from medical travel.

### **Is medical travel right for me?**

If your reasons for seeking medical care overseas is cost savings without sacrificing quality, high touch-high tech service, high quality, and the possibility of tourism, then this may be a good option. If your main concern is language and cultural barriers, New Zealand and Singapore offer world class medical options in first world, English speaking, culturally aligned countries for those seeking affordable medical care with a “Western” feel. There are also medical tourism insurance options for those looking for peace of mind regarding coverage for accidents or complications in the unlikely event something does go awry. However, if your main concern is legal recourse, or you’re wary of language and cultural barriers, travel in general and/or have a complicated medical history or unstable condition, then this may not be the option for you. For those with little experience or patience for international travel, or have a condition that could be risky or exacerbated by air travel, staying at home may be the more expensive, but less stressful option for you. When having major surgery, it is very important for the patient and to the recovery process to feel safe, as stress free and comfortable as possible.

### **Is a vacation realistic?**

A vacation is generally the last thing on the mind of those seeking major medical care overseas and tropical locations or pristine beaches should not dictate your medical travel destination. However, recuperating in a serene location, overlooking beautiful scenery and being able to afford round the clock care, can do wonders for the recovery process. And can make for a pleasant experience for companions or family traveling with. It really depends on the reasons for medically traveling and the severity of the procedure. For minor procedures, such as dental or LASIK, it is completely feasible to enjoy a vacation before or after. For procedures such as knee or hip surgery, it is suggested to “vacation” before surgery as mobility, rehabilitation and recovery will be an issue after surgery. But generally speaking, after any surgery or procedure, a patient’s main focus tends to be recovery and going home. It is important to do your research and find the best overall fit keeping in mind the right provider/specialist for your procedure, facility, cost and destination.

### **What are the general cost differences of medical treatments overseas?**

Depending where the procedure is performed, the average cost savings (including travel) is around 40-60 percent from US rates. According to the 2008 Deloitte & Touche Medical Tourism Study: “Medical care in countries such as India, Thailand and Singapore can cost as little as 10 percent of the cost of comparable care in the United States. The price is remarkably lower for a variety of services, and often includes airfare and stay in a resort hotel.”

### **What is the cost threshold that makes the overseas medical option more financially worthwhile than domestic options?**

According to *Patients Beyond Borders*: a good monetary barometer to consider the overseas medical treatment option is the “\$6000 Health Travel Rule”. “If your total quote for treatment (including consultations, procedure and hospital stay) is \$6,000 US or more



then you will probably save money traveling abroad for your care. If it is less than \$6,000 US, you're likely better off having your treatment domestically."

### **What should you bring?**

By all means, bring items that will make you feel more comfortable and at "home" when abroad, but packing light is always a good idea for any travel. As quoted from *Patients Beyond Borders*, "less to carry, less to lose". You can always buy sundries and the basics anywhere you go and many hotels/hospitals provide those items, however, there are certain things you should never forget. Such as your Passport, Visa (if required), medical records, current x-rays, consultation and medical notes and cash, travelers' checks and/or credit cards. Also, prescription or over-the-counter medications you're taking, sanitizer, phone numbers, addresses and hard copies of email correspondences, agreements and reservations. It's always a good idea to make a check list and triple check dates, reservations, appointments and documents.

### **Do I need a Visa?**

The visa requirements vary according to the origin of the passport, reason for travel and destination. Keep in mind, a visa may not be required as a tourist to a country, however, if going for medical or business reasons, you may be required to get a visa for those particular purposes. It is always best for Americans to check with the U.S. Department of State before traveling abroad (<http://travel.state.gov>). All travelers should make sure they have a valid passport that is at least 6 months from expiring and double check your destinations visa requirements.

### **How can patients manage their travel and medical plans as they undergo and recover from treatment?**

Veiovis knows medical travel inside and out. Its teams of experts handle all medical arrangements and concerns for patients and their families. Veiovis Case Managers bridge differences in time, language, culture, and environment to organize medical processes, from medical reviews and referrals, to discharge planning, recovery and aftercare, clinical claims review and follow-up care back home. Veiovis also connects patients to international travel and concierge partners for ease of travel and the best rates for airfare, hotels, and tour packages.

### **How can a patient correspond with an overseas doctor?**

Veiovis creates and maintains active communication channels between a patient's primary care doctor and his or her overseas physician. This ensures alignment of diagnosis, treatment, recovery plan and continuity of care.

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