

# Health and safety tips for your summer holidays

With the peak of the summer holidays approaching, International SOS, a medical and security services company, has compiled six useful tips for travellers, to help keep them safe and healthy during their sunny escapes.

While each destination has its own set of unique challenges, the tips that follow are applicable to most international travel locations.

**1. Don't wait with health concerns** - In some locations, such as remote areas, it can take hours or days to locate and travel to an appropriate medical treatment centre. When you are in unfamiliar territory, you can't afford to wait and see if a problem worsens. Travellers should act quickly at the first sign of a health issue and seek help through a travel assistance provider or local resource as soon as possible.

**2. Test the waters** - Each summer there's an increase in water-related accidents and illnesses. When swimming, remember that the water does not need to be very deep to cause trouble. Swift currents, rocks, tree branches and other submerged objects can cause serious bodily harm. Cold water can also be extremely dangerous, causing hypothermia even in hot weather. When combined with alcohol consumption and an unfamiliar environment, the dangers mount significantly. When it comes to consuming liquids, from tap water to ice cubes, be sure to familiarise yourself with the country's water safety recommendations to avoid illness, and when in doubt, stick to sealed bottled water.

**3. Mind the bite** - Bites and scratches from animals and insects - including dogs, cats, monkeys, bats and mosquitoes - can cause major issues for travellers, so make sure you have had the necessary medications or vaccinations to protect you before you travel. Keep your distance from animals when travelling and avoid the temptation to pet them, no matter how cute they may be. For travellers with severe allergies, be sure to carry a fresh epinephrine injection provided by your doctor for immediate response to a foreign bite.

**4. Manage your medications** - When travelling, carry a copy of the prescription written by your doctor and keep all medications in their original containers with labels intact. Note that some medications must be kept within a certain temperature range. Avoid leaving these prescriptions in a hot luggage compartment or car trunk. Bring at least a week's worth of extra doses of any medication you take regularly, to avoid running out if you are sidelined by an extended travel delay.

**5. Take care of your skin** - One of the quickest and most damaging injuries affecting travellers is sunburn, particularly in locations close to the Equator where the sun is strongest. Exposed and unprotected skin can burn in as little as 15 minutes, and those burns can become quite severe. An SPF of 45+ is recommended, as is limiting time spent in direct sunlight, particularly during peak hours (10 a.m. to 3 p.m.). Re-apply sunscreen often, particularly after enjoying a dip in the pool or ocean.

**6. Security** - Many countries are facing rising levels of economic pressure and as a result, there have been some reports of increasing instances of opportunistic street crime targeting foreign travellers. Travellers should be particularly aware of low-level scams at airports or railway stations, attempted over-charging by taxis, pickpockets and attempted theft or manipulation of credit card details. Constraints on government spending have also led to mounting tensions and there have been numerous strikes in countries including Greece, France, Spain, Italy, Bulgaria and Hungary. Strikes can occur with little or no notice and may result in scale backs or closures of public transportation. Prepare for a worst case scenario by researching ways to get around in the event of a shutdown.

For more, visit: <https://www.bizcommunity.com>