



## **Health Information**

All students participating in a Study Abroad program are required to complete the Health Information Form. This information is used to advise the Study Abroad Staff of health issues and assist in making any necessary preparations. By signing the Release and Waiver you have authorized Morehouse College Study Abroad staff or its agents to release medical information contained in the Study Abroad Center to health care providers and to secure medical treatment on your behalf in the event of emergency medical illness or injury. You have also agreed to accept financial responsibility for the treatment.

## **Mental Health**

Learning abroad can be both fulfilling and challenging for all students and can present some additional challenges for students with mental health conditions. Even if you have no history of a mental health condition, it is possible that the impact of cultural adjustment or being in a foreign environment can influence your well-being.

The Health Information Form requires you to disclose any past and current mental health issues, family history of mental health, indications of mental health concerns, and current prescription medicines. It is imperative for the Study Abroad Center staff to have this information before you study abroad in order to best support you and provide reasonable accommodations.

Past or current treatment for psychiatric and mental health conditions does not preclude you from studying abroad. However, if a healthcare professional recommends no travel or travel under certain conditions that cannot be met at a certain study location, you may be encouraged to focus on your health first and postpone program participation until a later time.

The following steps for managing mental health are important, regardless of where you will be traveling:

- Meet with your mental health professional prior to departure to discuss:
  - learning abroad and implications of learning abroad
  - your plan to manage your health while abroad
  - access to alternative support networks
- Discuss a realistic communication plan for your time abroad with your support networks (i.e. family and friends).

- Understand that ups and downs are normal during study abroad. Check in with yourself often and seek support if you are feeling ups and downs that are more intense than to be expected.
- Connect with a Counseling and disabilities Center on Campus prior to departure to set up onsite care with a mental health care professional, should you require this support.
- Plan to bring sufficient amounts of prescriptions with you for the entire duration of your program. Work with Program staff to be sure you can safely bring all necessary prescriptions abroad.

### **Physical Health**

Before you depart for studying abroad, understand the health conditions in your host country and obtain information about appropriate precautionary measures. The following steps are important, regardless of where you will be traveling:

- Eat lightly for several days after arrival until your system has had a chance to adjust to changes in climate and food. Adjusting to a new diet often causes mild intestinal upsets or diarrhea. You may wish to pack an anti-diarrhea medication. You should also check on other health issues, such as whether it is safe to drink the local water, and ask your doctor about preventive medication for the common illnesses that can result. If you are very ill, see a doctor.
- Some drugs available by prescription in the US are illegal in other countries. To determine the legality of your prescription, review the US Department of State Travel information regarding [prescriptions abroad](#), and consult [Consular Information](#) for the country(s) you intend to visit.
  - If your medication is legal but simply not available in the country you will be visiting, ask your health-care provider to write an official letter stating the medication has been prescribed.
  - In most cases, it is not legal or feasible to mail prescriptions from the US overseas. Plan to take enough in original bottles for your full program.
  - If your insurance only allows a few months of prescription at a time and this isn't enough for your term abroad, call your insurance company and ask for an exception. A copy of your acceptance from the Study Abroad office will often assist your appeal.
- If you have a medical condition that is not easily identified (diabetes, epilepsy, severe allergies), you should wear a medic alert bracelet while you are abroad and consider translation. You should also inform the Study Abroad Program Director



- (s) , traveling companions, and on-site staff so that they can be prepared in case of an emergency. Be sure to discuss a plan with your physician before you leave home.
- HIV/AIDS is a major concern in some locations. While abroad, avoid injections and blood transfusions. If an injection is required, make sure that the syringe comes directly from a sealed package. Diabetics are encouraged to bring a sufficient supply of needles and syringes with a prescription or doctor's authorization. Avoid ear piercing and tattooing while abroad.