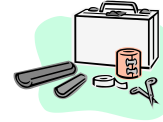


1. If travelling to remote areas in developing countries, you should be as medically self-sufficient as practically possible. Things to consider include:

- A comprehensive first aid kit.
- Commonly used medications e.g. painkillers, antiseptics.
- First aid training for yourself.
- Access to a nurse, doctor or paramedic, especially at a work site or mine site.
- Insurance which covers treatment and evacuation. Some insurance policies do not cover certain activities eg riding a motorbike, trekking, terrorist attacks.
- Medical alert band or bracelet to warn of potential emergency problems eg allergies, epilepsy, diabetes.



2. You should be familiar with certain things in preparation for a possible emergency:

- Where first aid equipment is kept, including sterile needles, syringes, IV cannula, and suture material. Is it accessible 24 hours a day?
- Medications - these should be clearly labelled with indications and dosages. Check expiry dates.
- Who is trained in first aid and CPR, and where to find them.
- How to contact a doctor or nurse in an emergency and after-hours.
- Where the closest reliable hospital is and how to get there. Are there English speaking doctors or nurses? Interpreters often do not understand medical terminology. IAMAT (International Association for Medical Assistance to Travellers) or the Worldwide Medical Directory may be able to recommend a doctor or hospital near you.
- Where is the closest working telephone or other form of communication, e.g. satellite phone, radio. Can you make international calls there?
- Evacuation procedures in case of a serious emergency.



3. Useful phone numbers to have handy:

- Local police, ambulance and fire brigade
- Local doctor and hospital
- Rescue groups
- Embassy or consulate
- Travel insurance contact or evacuation organization e.g. AEA/SOS
- Your employer in Australia or other country

4. Medical evacuation

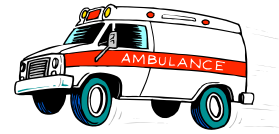
- Travel insurance or medical evacuation service - have contact numbers on hand (e.g. wallet card).
- Even if you are insured with the best, there may still be logistic considerations of how they will actually get to you if you are in a remote area. Think about this before an emergency happens.
- Where is the closest airport? Are there lights for landing at night? How will you get to the airstrip?



Delays may also occur because of fuel shortage, pilot shortage, weather, darkness, geographical isolation, physical hazards, crowds, fire, smoke, chemicals, gas, floods, confined spaces, or political violence. Some countries require authorisation for an air ambulance to land if it is coming from a foreign country. If the air ambulance is based more than 8 hours of flying time away, crew rest is compulsory before the next flight. This is for

their safety as well as yours.

- If you are looking after someone else who needs to be evacuated, remember the following steps: Medicate for pain prior to transport. Monitor and document vital signs if adequately trained. Keep patient warm, comfortable and reassured.
- Write everything down. Documentation of the patient's past and present medical history, circumstances of the emergency, allergies and medications can all be crucial and useful information.
- Patients may need to be stabilised at a local hospital before they can be transported safely. Find out where the best local medical facility is. Local hospitals may be in poor condition, and equipment may not be adequately sterilised. Bring your own needles, syringes, and IV cannula if necessary.
- Locate patient's passport, travel documents, medications, eyeglasses, etc.



5. **Call for help early.** International evacuation will generally take at least 24 hours to organise if you are in a remote area in a developing country.

6. Important information to give when calling for help:

- Nature of problem and severity of illness or injury, condition of patient, patient's medical history if known.
- Chief complaint and mechanism of injury.
- How many people are involved.
- Equipment required for patient transport.
- How they can contact you - your phone number, radio contact, etc.
- Your exact location - nearest town, airstrip, GPS co-ordinates.
- Weather.
- Other dangers involved, e.g. smoke, fires, floods, political unrest.
- Road conditions.
- How you plan to get to the airport or airstrip.



Give them as much information as possible so they can get to you as soon as possible. Plan the next communication.

7. **When calling for help, have pen and paper ready.** You may be given medical advice on how to deal with the emergency until help arrives, and possibly where you may be able to get reliable local medical help. Write down the details! Ask the identity of the person you spoke to and how you can contact them directly.

8. STAY CALM !!

If you are going to remote or dangerous locations, we highly recommend visiting a travel medicine centre to arrange first aid items, medications and information on arranging evacuations as safely and rapidly as possible.