

## International Travel Tips

Planning in advance when traveling overseas takes time, but doing so will create a sense of comfort. A good practice is to create a set of documents with important information. While electronic copies on your phone are important, it is also recommended to have a few hard copies available, especially for an emergency.

Suggestions are as follows:

1. Check out ahead of time the location of the nearest hospital or ER facility at your destination. Having the name, address, and phone number in the local language is advised. Note the local Emergency phone numbers (the equivalent of 911). Some countries have different numbers for fire, ambulance, police, etc.
2. Have a person or two available to aid in translation via cell phone (ie hotel concierges or proprietors). For example, this can be helpful when you are uncertain if restaurant staff clearly understand your requests. Equally, in the unlikely event of an emergency, this person can help you with medical staff, etc..
3. Create translated allergy phrases to help you when dining out. Make sure you understand the local words that relate to your specific food allergy so you can scan labels (if the country you are visiting supports food allergy labeling). From our experience, Europe has strong regulations in this regard, but the labeling in Asia is often difficult for westerners to read and lacks the consistency.
4. Obtain cell or mobile phone access through your US carrier, or, in some countries, you may be able to buy a pre-paid SIM card at the airport for your phone (if your phone isn't locked by your carrier!)
5. Before you leave, download translation apps for your mobile device.
6. Understand the region! For example, in Asia we had experiences with servers who assumed they could just remove or pick out the peanuts from the dish and everything would be ok! The education on food allergies is less prevalent in some overseas sites. We have found Europe, Australia, and New Zealand to be pretty aware).
7. If you are able to shop at stores for expatriates, large multinational chains (Auchan, Carrefour, etc.), and even larger domestic grocery stores (especially in Europe), you can often find imported and labeled snacks.
8. Try to secure the name of a doctor in your region of travel who understands food allergies. The American embassy or consulate can assist with this information.
9. Carrying a food allergy chef card is very useful. We always create a food allergy card in the language of the country we are traveling. We use the below website to create a generic card, but we always ask someone who can read/speak that language to edit and confirm the information listed.
  - o Link to create food allergy travel card:  
[http://www.selectwisely.com/catalog/Food\\_Allergies-1?gclid=CKvO-ooC4MYCFYQ8aQodhncKeQ](http://www.selectwisely.com/catalog/Food_Allergies-1?gclid=CKvO-ooC4MYCFYQ8aQodhncKeQ)
10. We use the motto, especially in a foreign situation, "when in doubt leave it out". This is the time to eat your packed safe snacks. Note similar food/brands are not always manufactured in the same way you are accustomed to in the US.
11. Search for blog posts or expatriate food allergy groups giving you extra insight for restaurant or grocery store safe options.

As always, please discuss individual health questions and medical issues with a qualified personal physician.