

## MEDICAL PRECAUTIONS & ADVICE

The team member should ensure that they have both the adequate medicine and the permission of their physician for the mission trip. All team medical information can be communicated to both the team leader and the mission coordinator by completing the Missionary Information Form.

The stress of travel and change in environment and physical activity can often cause illness if not addressed. These problems include but are not limited to:

- Dehydration – Higher altitudes and heat can easily dehydrate the body. It is possible to dehydrate without sweating.
- Sun Burn – The sunlight is much stronger when this close to the equator.
- Car sickness – Mountain roads may sometimes cause motion sickness.
- Allergies – Pollen and dust may cause problems in allergy sufferers.
- Gastrointestinal Illness – Commonly brought about by eating contaminated foods and drink.

All of these potential medical conditions can be avoided by following the proper safety precautions. Always drink plenty of purified water, especially when working in the exposed sun. Dehydration occurs faster than the team member may be used to because of the elevation and emotional energy felt when performing mission work. Signs of dehydration include tiredness, confusion or fuzzy thinking, inability to concentrate, urine that is bright yellow gold, and salty lips when you lick them. The key is to keep hydrated. Water is provided on the worksites and at the hotel, and is readily available in many *colmados*. Unbalanced electrolytes can cause major headaches and dizziness.

Wear sunscreen and use a hat to protect yourself from the sun's ray.

If the team member is susceptible to motion sickness, please let the mission coordinator know in advance of leaving the airport. Sometimes a seat next to the window or up front can ease the symptoms of the sickness. If the team member regularly requires medicine to counteract the symptoms of motion sickness, the team member should bring the medication on the trip.

Allergy sufferers often feel the impact of the pollen and dust in The Dominican Republic. If the team member regularly suffers from allergies, the team member should bring a decongestant, antihistamine, or prescribed drug to combat the allergens.

All food provided by your team leaders for the mission team is safe and clean. However, food sold in streets and some restaurants of the Dominican Republic may contain some harmful bacteria or parasites. Also, water consumed by the mission team should be purified clean water. Always drink "drinking water" or "Agua Pura". The water from the public water system can have its problems. Some ice sold in stores or "Colmados" is also not suitable for consumption. Following these simple guidelines will spare the team many inconveniences.

Please be culturally sensitive if you are offered food or drink in someone's home. You can't simply say no to food that has been placed in front of you because it looks uninviting. You will offend your host(s) and you defeat the purpose of being there, which is to show Christ's love. Pray and ask for God's grace!

