

Useful precautions for travellers

Faced with natural disasters, terrorist attacks, accidents or incidents of all kinds, travellers must ensure their safety more than ever. A few simple precautions are enough to minimise the risks.

Paris, July 11th, 2005 – Mondial Assistance Group, the international leader in travel insurance and assistance, reminds all travellers that a few essential precautions can help them avoid difficult or even dangerous situations.

During the past several months, a series of natural catastrophes have struck all continents. In Asia, the Tsunami will remain in our minds as one of the most devastating disasters of the beginning of the 21st century, and in America, the dreaded hurricane season has begun to take its toll. In Europe, the recent, deadly attacks in London remind us of the ongoing threats of terrorist attacks. On a smaller scale, travellers must also deal with road accidents involving buses and automobiles, and incidents of daily life.

Although a great many incidents are unpredictable by nature, it is possible to avoid making difficult situations even worse by taking a few simple precautions:

Administrative precautions

- Make two photocopies of the main pages of your passport as well as the pages that list your visas. Give one copy to a family member or friend not travelling with you and be sure that they can fax it to you if necessary. Keep the second copy with you, but separate from your passport.
- Make two photocopies of your travel insurance and assistance certificates. Keep one copy with you and give the other to a family member or friend.
- Make photocopies of your travellers checks and keep them with you, but separate from the originals.
- Before closing your suitcase, make an inventory of everything it contains. The simplest thing to do is to put all objects on a table or bed and take a photograph. Keep this photo in a safe place in your home.
- Verify the coverage of your travel insurance and repatriation assistance contracts.

Medical precautions

- Make sure that your health is compatible with the trip you are about to make and the activities you plan on doing once you arrive (sports ...).
- Make sure you have received all the necessary vaccinations in compliance with your destinations.
- Make an appointment with your dentist before taking a long trip.
- If you take regular medication, make sure you have enough medicine to last throughout your trip and verify whether or not you need to declare it upon entering the foreign country you are visiting.
- Keep a summary of your medical situation on you (allergies, diabetes, haemophilia, medical history...).
- If you have a health problem while abroad, and do not feel comfortable with the local medical equipment, contact your assistance company.
- Keep a medical first aid kit with you at all times (bandages, insect repellent, antiseptic cream or spray, water purifying tablets...)

Hygiene

- Only drink « drinkable » water (water in sealed bottles). Use drinkable water as well to brush your teeth. If you are unsure as to the quality of the water, boil it or use a water-purifying tablet.
- Avoid eating raw vegetables, salads, unpeeled fruit, uncooked seafood, ice cream ice cubes, raw or undercooked meat or fish, cold or reheated dishes.
- Avoid all contact with live poultry or pork, particularly in market places.
- Personal hygiene is essential. Always wash your hands after using the lavatories and before eating or touching food, especially if you are camping.
- Avoid swimming in cold water (torrents...), marshes, swamps and rice fields. Swimming in salt water is often safer and healthier ... but avoid dangerous areas.
- Avoid piercing and tattooing as well as acupuncture unless you are absolutely certain that the instruments used are perfectly sterile.

Practical precautions

- Plan to arrive at the airport early enough to respect applied safety measures and avoid unnecessary stress and overbooking.
- Make sure that you have electrical adapters, which correspond to the countries you will visit and the electrical appliances you will take with you (mobile phone, Personal Digital Agenda, battery charger for a camera...).
- Label your luggage properly and keep all bags with you at all times.

In any case, if you run into difficulty or have a problem, the first thing to do is to contact your assistance company.

Mondial Assistance Group: an intervention every 3 seconds, anywhere in the world.

Worldwide leader in assistance, travel insurance and customer services, today Mondial Assistance Group counts nearly 7,600 staff members speaking over 40 languages. They work throughout the world in collaboration with a network of 400,000 service providers and 240 correspondents. 250 million people, or 4% of the world population, benefit from the Group's services, which it proposes on 5 continents in 28 countries. The Group mainly operates under its three international brands: ELVIA, Mondial Assistance and World Access.

Mondial Assistance Group is a member of the Allianz Group through AGF and RAS International, each holding a 50% capital stake.

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