

# STUDY ABROAD PRE-DEPARTURE HEALTH & SELF CARE

As you prepare for your time abroad, you should think about your health needs and use this pre-departure time to take action to get your needs in order. If you have any questions or concerns, please let us know. We are familiar with **ALL** the feelings and concerns that can arise. We are here to chat and assist!

## PRESCRIPTION MEDICATIONS

- If you take any prescribed medication, you should bring enough to last your entire stay because not all USA prescription medications are available abroad.
- If you currently receive any medical treatments that need to continue while you're abroad, please let us know at least 4-6 weeks before departure.

## GENDER PRONOUNS & FOREIGN LANGUAGES

If a foreign language is spoken in your host country, please be aware that from a grammatical perspective, the local language may leave less flexibility than English for expression of nonbinary terms. For example, Spanish, French, Italian, and German grammar give pronouns, people, and objects a gender. Be prepared that people are going to make mistakes with pronouns, especially if their grammatically gendered native language makes it complicated. Practice patience, remind people politely, and know that languages are slowly changing to be more inclusive.



## MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELING ABROAD

Different providers (ISA Worldstrides, API, ASA, CIEE) offer different options to connect virtually/over the phone with a US based licensed therapist while your abroad.

Students can also reach out to their professor/Resident Director in country to discuss meeting with a counselor in person. Contact the Office of International Education for more information.

Mindhamok is one of the services to help with your mental, physical and social wellbeing throughout your journey abroad. Student have access to the



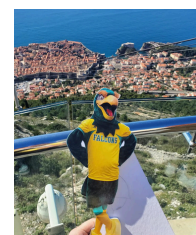
service for the duration of their term abroad - check with your study abroad provider!



## PREPARE FOR CULTURE SHOCK

Culture shock is the feeling of disorientation experienced by someone when they are suddenly subjected to an unfamiliar culture and way of life. It can be caused by a range of things, both big and small, such as unfamiliar greetings and hand gestures, strange food, difficult language barriers, getting lost in a new city or making a cultural faux pas because you didn't know the local custom. **It's 100% normal to feel:** disconnected, isolated, lonely or out of place, anxious, depressed or panicked, FOMO or homesick.

After the initial honeymoon and negotiation periods have ended, you'll enter adjustment, which can lead to acceptance and adaptation!



## MAINTAIN HEALTHY COMMUNICATION SCHEDULE & PHYSICAL ACTIVITIES

Having too much contact with family and friends back home can be counterproductive to your adjustment. Focus on learning about your new city and the people who live there, and not on what you're missing back home. Remember, if you call home upset, people will want to "rescue" you--don't over catastrophize.

### FOR QUESTIONS OR ADVICE, CONTACT:

Office of International Education at [inhelp@fitchburgstate.edu](mailto:inhelp@fitchburgstate.edu) or Nicole Salerno, Assistant Director of Study Abroad, at [nsalerno@fitchburgstate.edu](mailto:nsalerno@fitchburgstate.edu).

**Find us in Hammond 316!**

# Health & Self care checklist



## MEDICATIONS

- Ask Doctor for enough medication to last for duration of program
- Get generic or internationally recognized name of medications
- IF you cannot bring enough for the duration of your time abroad, contact us

## SELF CARE

- Contact your USA therapist to help formulate a success plan
- Schedule zoom/telehealth therapy sessions for time abroad
- Log on to mindhamok and request a chat or schedule an appointment with a coach/counselor

## JET LAG

- Avoid Alcohol on plane
- Stay hydrated
- Avoid long naps day of arrival
- Go to sleep at normal hour on arrival day
- Drink orange juice\*

\*Former students have told us OJ helps!

## PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

- Pack flat shoes for walking cobblestone streets
- Maintain workout routine
- Consider joining gym while abroad (Program providers can assist with recommendations!)

## COMMUNICATION

- Schedule initial check in phone call or facetime with loved ones back home
- If feeling overwhelmed, contact your Site Director

## CULTURE SHOCK

- Prepare your support system for up and down communications from you; Ask them to listen rather than save
- Prepare a routine that will help offset homesickness

