

without air conditioning, window screens or bed nets. Therefore, you must take precautions to protect yourself and your family. For recommendations, see the section entitled "Individual health assessment" on page 5.

Travelling to seek medical care abroad

These days, more Canadians are travelling abroad, often to developing countries, for health care and treatment ranging from bathing in healing waters to organ transplants to cosmetic surgery. No matter the reason, if you're a "medical tourist" you should understand that health systems outside Canada may operate very differently from what you're accustomed to, and are not subject to Canadian rules and regulations. For instance, therapies considered "natural" are not necessarily safe. Mineral and "holy" waters may be sources of infectious diseases. Hospital and health care services may not be up to Canadian standards.

The hip replacement surgery Brian had overseas was available sooner than what he could get at home. He had planned well, both financially and personally, and took his sister with him for support. The procedure was a success, but he didn't heal as fast as expected. His immune system was weakened and infection took hold. After an extra week in hospital, Brian wanted to go home despite being too weak to fly as a regular passenger. His sister had to arrange for medical evacuation back to Canada, where Brian spent another two weeks in recovery.

Before making a commitment to undergo medical treatment outside Canada, consult your health care provider or a travel health clinic. In addition to discussing your travel health-related risks, your health care provider will know your history and the procedure you're travelling to obtain and can advise you accordingly.