

Bringing Medication Abroad: Things You Need To Know

If you anticipate taking prescription medication while abroad, you will want to bring enough with you for your entire stay, if legally permitted. It can take quite a bit of time to make the necessary arrangements, and different countries have different restrictions, so please look into this right away using the process outlined below.

If you are plan on taking any medication (over the counter or prescription), you will need to reach out to AXA-Assistance to ensure that you can legally bring the medication into your host country.

AXA Assistance works with CISI to help students that will be or are currently studying abroad with the following:

- Research if a medication (over the counter or prescription) is allowed to be brought into a specific country
- Locate medical providers within your host country if you become ill.

AXA Assistance services are included in the CISI coverage. **You do NOT have to pay anything extra for the service described below.**

If you plan on bringing any medications, you will need to go through the following steps:

- Contact AXA Assistance as soon as you get your welcome email from CISI stating that you are now enrolled in their policy.
 - On page two of the document sent by CISI in your enrollment email, there should be a policy number near the top of the page. You will need this when you contact AXA-Assistance.
 - When you call, explain that you are a student at UW-Eau Claire planning on studying abroad in (country) from (starting month) to (ending month). Give them the CISI policy number mentioned above. Explain that you are currently taking some medication and that you would like to open up a research case to see if you can bring that medication with you into your host country.
- AXA-Assistance will do research on that medication and if it is allowed in your host country. They will also research the availability of that medication in your home country as well.
- **If allowed**, they will let you know what steps need to be taken (doctor's letter, specific forms, etc.) to bring that medication into your host country legally.
- **If not allowed**, they will ask you to talk to your U.S. doctor for alternative medications. **NOTE: AXA ASSISTANCE CANNOT PROVIDE A LIST OF ALTERNATIVE MEDICATIONS THAT ARE ALLOWED INTO YOUR HOST COUNTRY.**
 - You will then need to go to your doctor in the U.S. and that doctor will generate a list of possible alternative medications that work for your specific case.
 - You will then call AXA Assistance and provide that list that your U.S. doctor gave you to see if any (or all) of the alternatives are allowed into your host country.
 - You will then work with your doctor to see which of the allowable medications is the best fit for you.
- **FOR ANY MEDICATION THAT YOU PLAN TO BRING INTO YOUR HOST COUNTRY, AT A MINIMUM, IT IS A GOOD IDEA TO HAVE THE FOLLOWING:**
 - Original packaging
 - Name of the medication
 - Dosage
 - Frequency
 - Condition that the medication treats
 - Prescription (if applicable)

- Doctor's letter (if applicable)

AXA Assistance Contact Information (24/7/365)

Phone (1): 443-470-3043

Phone (2): 855-951-2326

Email: medassist-usa@axa-assistance.us

Other Important Points to Remember:

- 1) **You are responsible for making your own arrangements for necessary medication.** You will need to contact your AXA Assistance, your doctor, insurance agency, and appropriate government agencies in order to work out your specific accommodations. While you may only be able to get a one-month supply of your medication while at home, many doctors and insurance agencies will make an exception in the case of study abroad. However, you may need to pre-pay your co-pays; your doctor may need to write multiple one-month prescriptions, etc.
- 2) **The sooner, the better!** It may be time-consuming to arrange for a supply of a medication for an entire semester from your doctor or insurance company, or to obtain permits from the host country to import a particular medication. Start now!
- 3) **The more documentation, the better.** You need complete, written prescriptions for all medications you are taking abroad that include: your name, birth date, U.S. address, the commercial and chemical (generic) name of the medication, the dosage, the form and the quantity. A copy of your medical record will also be helpful to a local doctor.
- 4) **Controlled drugs require permits.** Medication containing ingredients considered controlled substances in the host country usually require a permit from the host country for the student to enter with them, in addition to a complete prescription.
- 5) **At customs in the airport, declare all prescription medication you are carrying with you into your host country** in order to avoid potential complications later.
- 6) **Pharmacies abroad are not required to honor U.S. prescriptions.** If you need to have your prescriptions filled/refilled abroad, you will need to make an appointment with a local doctor in the host country in order to get a new prescription. Ask about this in advance; your on-site liaison may be able to suggest a physician for you.
- 7) **Shipping medication/medical devices from home abroad may not work.** You often need to obtain permits to ship medication or medical devices into the host country, especially if the medications include controlled substances. Shipped medications are often hung up in customs and never delivered, or arrive well past the time they are needed. Check with CISI and your insurance company for possible assistance.

You may also be able to find additional information at the **embassy of your host country** in Washington, D.C. You can find embassy web sites at: <https://www.usembassy.gov/>.