

## **Travel Medical Insurance**

Travel medical insurance is for travelers who are leaving their home country. It provides coverage for medical emergencies and evacuations. Depending on the company selling it, it is sometimes called International Medical Insurance, International Travel Insurance, or Worldwide Medical Insurance.

### **How is Travel Medical different from other types of insurance?**

These plans are for travelers leaving their home country that are concerned with coverage abroad. Many insurance plans don't cover you once you leave the US, and an accident or illness abroad would not be covered.

### **Biggest difference: It focuses on emergency medical/evacuation vs trip cancellation coverages**

With a travel medical plan, the focus is on emergency medical and evacuation costs.

If you are abroad and have an accident or become ill, it would cover medical costs for you. Emergency dental treatment is usually included and emergency transportation (ambulance, air lift) services are also covered.

Emergency medical evacuations will get you out of a remote area and transported to a place where you can receive proper medical care. If you are killed or die on your trip, the repatriation coverage will ensure your body is properly transported home or to a funeral home nearby.

Travel medical plans often include some Accidental Death and Dismemberment (AD&D) and/or term life benefits which are paid regardless of any coverage you may have back home for a covered injury. This coverage can fill out your life insurance benefits and provide extra coverage for you or your family in the case of a serious accident.

### **It is cheaper than trip cancellation insurance**

Medical plans are priced based on age, trip length, and coverage amount. This usually adds up to a few dollars per day, so it is a very economical way to get emergency medical coverage abroad.

Trip insurance with cancellation, interruption, delay, baggage coverage, etc, are based mostly on the cost of the trip. It usually costs 4-10% of the insured trip cost, so these plans can easily be in the hundreds of dollars.

### **It has some trip insurance benefits in some plans**

Some medical plans offer a few trip insurance-like benefits such as minimal trip interruption coverage, coverage for lost or delayed baggage and even trip delays.

This is a nice additional benefit, but if you are looking for true trip insurance benefits you should look at that type of plan.

### **Examples of why would you need emergency medical coverage**

- You're sent on a long business trip and contract a severe case of food poisoning.
- You trip on a cobblestone street and break a tooth.
- You are traveling ahead of your church missionary group to organize housing and get in a traffic accident.
- You are traveling in a foreign country with your children and are injured in a fall.
- You want the assurance of having travel medical assistance services to help you in an emergency.

## What does it cover?

The following coverage is typically found in a Travel Medical insurance plan.

- Reimbursement for **unexpected medical costs** due to emergency medical care.
- Reimbursement for **unexpected dental costs** due to an accident.
- **Advance payments to medical facilities** and help get emergency medical transportation when you are injured.
- Coordination of and payment for **emergency medical evacuation services**, including medical care providers to attend to you until you reach an appropriate medical care facility.
- **AD&D and travel accident benefits** to help take care of you or your family if you are seriously injured or killed while traveling.
- **Emergency travel assistance services** to help you locate a local an appropriate medical facility to care for your medical needs and those of your family.

## Examples of travelers that might buy it

Travelers like these should purchase travel medical insurance:

- **US Citizens going abroad.** A typical health insurance plan doesn't extend outside the U.S. borders, so if you're traveling abroad, you'll want travel medical coverage for accidental illnesses and injuries that occur outside your health insurance coverage zone.
- **Visitors to the US.** When family members visit from abroad and stay a few days or even a year, they should have coverage for their stay.
- **Business travelers working overseas.** If your health insurance plan doesn't extend outside the U.S. (and most don't), you'll need some medical and evacuation coverage if you're working overseas.
- **Expats and long-term travelers.** Not only does your own health insurance (even Medicare) fail to cover you outside the U.S., if you are visiting multiple countries, you'll want to ensure you have the same coverage no matter where you travel.
- **Missionaries and foreign aid workers.** Just because you are traveling to make a difference in someone else's life doesn't mean something bad can't happen to you. Be sure you are protected in case you have a medical emergency or need to be evacuated to safety.

## What are the types of Travel Medical plans?

Travel medical plans come in three types:

1. **Single trip travel medical (the most commonly purchased)** – this is coverage for a single trip up to six months. It covers the length of the vacation and is paid for up front.
2. **Multi-trip travel medical** – this coverage is for multiple trips and often purchased in 3, 6, and 12-month segments.
3. **Long-term major medical** – this is continuous medical coverage for the long term traveler and typically paid on a monthly basis. These plans can often be renewed.

## How much does Travel Medical Insurance cost?

Since travel medical insurance does not provide trip cancellation and other package-like benefits, the cost of the plan is often quite economical.

A typical single trip travel medical plan can range from \$40-\$80 for a relatively short overseas trip. In general, the premium amount for a travel medical plan is based on:

- The length of the trip
- The age of the traveler
- The medical and evacuation coverage limits

While some travel medical plans will cover a few package-like benefits, the typical travel medical plan does not cover trip cancellation, trip interruption, baggage loss, travel delays and other benefits typically associated with package plans. Travel medical plans are meant for the overseas traveler seeking medical insurance protection outside their home coverage network.

All travel insurance companies include a free look period with a refund that lets you review the plan documentation. If you decide you need something a little different, you can make changes to your policy or cancel it for a refund (minus a small fee).

## **Summary**

- Travel medical plans are focused on medical and evacuation coverage
- Because this type of plan doesn't include many package plan benefits, it's usually very affordable
- This type of coverage is crucial for those traveling abroad to protect against financial losses due to an illness or injury