***ShuarHands, Inc*. and *Niños Shecanos***

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Thank you for interest in participating in a humanitarian visit to our Clinic**.** Below you will find important information.

**YOUR HOSTS**

Clinic Director and Legal Council of *Niños Shecanos*: Luis Fuentes

asociacionshecanos.org

President of *ShuarHands, Inc*.: Bette Palovchik: 619-478-2642 619-892-9580 (cell) U.S.

www.shuarhands.com

**CLINIC**

**Policlínica Social Asociación Niños Shecanos**. We provide medical treatment, a complete laboratory, pharmacy and dental office for the poor and extremely poor

4ta Avenida. 2-61 Zona 2, San Pedro Sacatepequez, San Marcos, Guatemala, Central America

**IMMUNIZATIONS (CDC RECOMMENDED VACCINES)**

 Hepatitis A or Immune Globulin (IG).

 Hepatitis B, if you might be exposed to blood (for example, health-care workers), have sexual contact with the local population, stay more than 6 months in the region, or be exposed through medical treatment.

 Typhoid, particularly if you are visiting developing countries in this region.

 Yellow fever vaccination, if you will be traveling outside urban areas.

 As needed, booster doses for tetanus-diphtheria and measles.

You can go to the CDC site for Guatemala at

http://wwwn.cdc.gov

**PREVENTATIVE MEASURES FOR** **LONG FLIGHTS**

Get up and walk around at least once an hour.

While seated, flex your ankles and move your feet around to stimulate blood circulation.

Remain hydrated.

Consider wearing support stockings or elastic wraps to keep blood from settling in the veins in your legs.

If you can tolerate it, take an aspirin before the flight.

**INSURANCE**

*ShuarHands, Inc* and *Association Niños Shecanos* carry no Malpractice Insurance, Long Term Disability Insurance, Workers Compensation Insurance, Liability Insurance nor Traveler's Insurance. You will sign a separate waiver acknowledging this fact. You can purchase insurance individually as you wish. It is recommended that you purchase traveler's insurance.

**WEATHER**

In Guatemala City the temperature ranges from 60-80 degrees F, averaging around 70 degrees. In San Marcos the temperature ranges from 50-70 degrees F, averaging around 60 degrees. Think layers.

**ALTITUDE**

**Guatemala City** Guatemala's capital, sits at 4,855 feet (1480m).If you are hyper-sensitive to altitude, you may experience slight problems Go slow and easy upon arrival to allow your body to adjust.

**San Marcos** isone of the 22 Departamentos or States in Guatemala located in the highlands about 100 miles (5 hours via vehicle) west of Guatemala City.

**Sister Cities San Marcos** (25,000 inhabitants) and **San Pedro** (42,000) sit at an elevation of 2398 m or 7,868 feet. At this elevation you will notice the change in altitude. Move slowly and rest. See below for more on altitude.

**Altitude** **sickness** usually manifests as insomnia, headaches, and/or nausea. In the event that you do experience symptoms of altitude sickness, in most cases they can be **remedied by** **drinking lots of water, getting lots of rest, and taking aspirin**. If you are more than a little fatigued or if you experience mild headaches, taking DIAMOX is an option. DIAMOX is a drug that increases oxygen profusion. We recommend you carry your own, but you can buy DIAMOX, or its equivalent, in most major cities at local pharmacies. If you experience severe headaches or respiratory problems (including acute shortness of breath), consult a doctor immediately. One final note with respect to altitude, use sun block. You may feel cool while high in the mountains, but because of the altitude —you are much closer to the sun—the risk of sunburn is greater. Use a sun block level rated **at least** 15 SPF.

**STAYING** **HEALTHY**

1. Get the recommended immunizations (see above);   
2. Wash your hands frequently with soap and water, use hand sanitizer;   
3. Boil it, cook it, peel it, or forget it;   
4. If visiting an area where there is risk for malaria, take your malaria prevention medication before, during, and after travel, as directed by your doctor;   
5. Don't share needles with anyone;   
6. To avoid bites and serious diseases, don't handle animals (especially monkeys, dogs, and cats);   
7. Bring enough of any prescription medications you need to take;   
8. Don't have unprotected sex; and  
9. Educate yourself. Please notify leaders if you become ill.

**WATER**

 Drink only bottled or boiled water or soft drinks.

⦁ Brush your teeth with bottled water.

⦁ Stay hydrated.

⦁ You can make water safer by using a water-purifier (if bottled/boiled water is unavailable):

(1) Use a Water Purifier: Katadyn makes Extream ViruStat that claims to filter out waterborne cysts and protozoa like Giardia and Cryptosporidium as well as waterborne bacteria and viruses;

(2) Add iodine tablets to the filtered water.

Water-purifiers can be found in most camping/outdoor supply stores. Before you buy a purifier make sure it removes both viruses and bacteria. If it does not, your water may look clean but there will be enough little critters swimming in there to make you sick.

We will be stopping to buy water while on the road and will have bottled water at the hospital and the hotels.

**FOOD**

**Avoid:**

* un-pasteurized dairy products
* food sold by street vendors
* mayonnaise
* water-based vegetables, i.e., lettuce
* ice
* juice with water or ice in it
* seafood if you are in the mountains
* If you eat eggs, order them well cooked.

While in Guatemala, eat only well-cooked food or fruits and vegetables you have peeled yourself. Eat only in restaurants that seem clean. **To stay healthy follow this rule of thumb: boil it, cook it, peel it, or forget it.**

**Snacks from home:**

protein bars

instant oatmeal envelopes

instant soup envelopes

mints/gum

**TOILETRIES AND PERSONAL MEDICAL KIT**

It is necessary that we know of all of your medical history/problems prior to departure as well as any medications or supplements you are taking. All information will be kept confidential. It is also important that if you develop medical issues, regardless of how minor they may seem that the team leader is notified.

**Recommended** **items in personal medical kit:** Alcohol based antimicrobial hand wash  
 Anti-malarial (if going to the jungle)  
 Band-Aids   
 Extra contact lens solution  
 Extra pair of prescription glasses  
 Ibuprofen and Acetaminophen   
 Imodium or other anti-diarrhea medication   
 Insect repellent (DEET)  
 Iodine tabs for water purification (consider vit C as reversal agent)  
 Pepto Bismol   
 Personal medications in original containers  
 Powdered Gatorade  
 Sanitary napkins

Sun block / sunglasses / hat   
 Topical antibiotic (Bactroban is best but expensive)

**Recommended Toiletries:**

Toilet paper (**carry with you at all times**) Remove center tube and collapse

Wash kit (travel-size items)

Moist towelettes, hand sanitizer, shampoo, lotion, toothpaste, toothbrush, dental floss, deodorant

Sun screen, lip balm

‘Tide Washing Tabs’ or other small size laundry soap.

**ARRIVAL AND IN-COUNTRY TRAVEL**

It is expected that you arrive in Guatemala City in the late afternoon or evening on Saturday. Ground transportation will be provided from the airport to the hotel from 6PM to 11PM Guatemala time. After or before that time you will travel by taxi to the hotel. We will stay overnight in Guatemala City. Leaving the hotel at night is discouraged due to safety issues. In the morning we will travel by van from Guatemala City to San Marcos stopping along the way for breakfast, lunch and to view Mayan Ruins. It should take approximately six (6) hours.

**POSSIBLE ACCOMMODATIONS (phone numbers are for dialing from the U.S.)**

**Hotel Pan American,** Guatemala City

9A St & 6A Ave Zona 1, 01001

**Hotel Fortuna**, Guatemala City, 12a Calle 8-42, Tel: 011 (502) 2238 2484

Fax: 011 (502) 2220 5998 [hotelfortunaroyal@yahoo.com.ar](mailto:hotelfortunaroyal@yahoo.com.ar)

**Posada Belen Museo Inn,** Guatemala City

13 Calle A 10-30, Zona 1, 01001

**Hotel Villa Astur/Hotel**, San Marcos, 9a Calle 2-25 Zona 1

Tel: 011 (502) 77602346 Fax: 011 (502) 77600107

**Hotel Miralvalle**, San Pedro, 5a. Calle 2-43 Zona 4, San Pedro Sacatepéquez, San Marcos, Teléfono 011 (502) 7760-2624

**Hotel Santa Clara**, Antigua, 2a Av Sur 20, Tel: 011 (502) 78320342 or

011 (502) 78324291 [www.hotelsantaclaraantigua.com](http://www.hotelsantaclaraantigua.com)

**Hotel Casa Rustica,** Antigua

6th Avenue North No 8 (One From Block Central Plaza), Antigua Guatemala

**CULTURAL ITEMS and SUGGESTIONS**

Remember, you are in Guatemala on an international medical trip in a developing country, not a recreational vacation. There will be unexpected delays, noisy travel, and bumpy roads. The culture, values and customs may be different from what you would expect. Please dress in a conservative manner. People may make assumptions about you by how you act and what you say. Enjoy visiting with the people, the country and the children.

**MONEY AND BANKING**

**To avoid your ATM cards from being cancelled:** Before leaving home**,** inform your bank or credit union of your travel dates out of the country. Whenever unusual overseas charges appear on an ATM card, it is frozen since that is the most common form of ATM or credit card fraud.

Guatemala uses Quetzales. $1.00 = Q7.7 (rates change daily) A combination of cash, traveler's checks and an ATM card is best. You could bring around $200 cash in 20 dollar bills in good to excellent condition (damaged or torn bill are not accepted). Many places will not cash 50 or 100 dollar bills. There are ATM's at some of the local banks where you can get cash using VISA or other well-known cards. Bring money for shopping!

**SAFETY**

Do not walk around alone at night; use the “buddy” system. Please advise team members, hosts, or hotel staff of your leaving. Always be aware of your surroundings. Do not wear flashy jewelry. Please dress in a conservative manner as we do not wish to offend local community members. You may wish to use a fanny-pack or money belt. Make a photocopy of your passport and keep it separate from your passport. Please advise leaders of any problems.

**GIFTS FOR LOCALS: CHILDREN and/or HOSPITAL STAFF**  
We welcome you to bring gifts for local children who live in poverty and extreme poverty: school supplies, small educational toys, puzzles, art projects, back packs, etc. Our goal is to schedule a time for you to distribute items to needy children and families. If not, Clinic Director Luis Fuentes will house the supplies and distribute them at a later date. We also welcome donations medical supplies and medicines. Please remember that your most important gift is the medical care you are providing.  If you want to give a gift to the local hospital staff, you can give a gift specifically from you to that person. 

**DEPARTURE FROM SAN MARCOS to ANTIGUA**

Team members will depart San Marcos by bus or van early Saturday morning. Transportation will be provided to Antigua where you will overnight. It is your option to stay a few days in this beautiful World Heritage Site or catch a bus to Guatemala City on Sunday for your departing flight. See “Trip Information” for a listing of travel agents. Personnel at your hotel can also help.

**PACKING SUGGESTIONS**

**CLOTHING: Dress in a conservative manner. Layers are best, weather is unpredictable:**

**Personal:** (mix and match outfits)

Pants: both light-weight & heavier.

Skirts/dress

Tee-shirts/tank top/long sleeve shirts

Hat or visor

Socks and travel socks (compression)

Tights or leggings

Sweatshirt or jacket

Comfortable walking shoes/Flip flops/sandals for shower area

Underwear/Pajamas

One outfit for special events

Umbrella or poncho/handkerchief

**Work:**

You can wear your street clothes or scrubs. Comfortable shoes

Lab coat are recommended with name tag.

**Gear:**

Bum bag/fanny pack/day pack/money belt

Plastic bags

Small flashlight (carry with you)

Glasses (prescription) and Sunglasses

Snack items (protein bars, etc)

Travel alarm clock, Travel neck pillow, and/or Sheet sleep bag (silk)

I-pod or walkman/Reading/writing materials (light weight)

Camera/Film/Extra batteries/Charger as needed

Presentation materials to share with your Guatemala counterpart

**Miscellaneous (Luggage & Food)**

* Do not take anything that you are unwilling to lose or cannot replace.
* Label your luggage with last name, date & flight number. Include your medications, documentation, wash kit, valuables and flashlight in carry-on.
* You can take **one** **carryon** bag: 45 INCH/114 CM, 40LBS/18KGS
* And one personal item: back pack, purse, computer
* Most airlines allow one **checked bags**-NO CHARGE. 62 INCH/157CM/50 lbs
* We encourage you to bring **donations** (medical and school/educational supplies)
* Frequently meals on flights for purchase only.

**Electricity & Time:**

Guatemala's electrical current is 115V to 125V, 60Hz; plugs have two flat prongs (same as in North America). Adapters are NOT needed. GMT-6 hours/Mountain Time

**Visas:**

Guatemala does not require visas for American citizens. Passport must be valid for at least 6 months.

**Authorization to practice medicine:**

Guatemala does not require authorization for our doctors to practice medicine. We request you carry a copy of your medical license.