

Way To Health

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Haiti Mission Trip November 2023

Before you go:

One most important things you can do to ensure you experience the best possible mission trip is to plan ahead. Third world travel can be unpredictable and always requires flexibility, but you can eliminate many “surprises” by being well prepared.

Passport

The Haitian authorities require that all Americans entering Haiti have a valid passport. You will not be allowed into Haiti without one. Check with you post office for a passport application, or go to the U.S. Department of State web page, <http://travel.state.gov/passport> All travelers should bring two colored photocopies of you passport. Give one to the team leader and keep one in your personal baggage.

Immunizations

Because we are a medical mission, we recommend the following (more information is available on CDC.gov)

Anti-Malaria medications. Usually this is Doxycycline 100mg, 21 tablets. One a day for 7 days before you leave, one a day while in Haiti and continue one a day after arriving home until all tables are gone.

Typhoid vaccine, is a tablet

Influenza (if in season)

Tetanus injection

Hepatitis A and B vaccines. Both of these are a series of three separate vaccinations.

Cipro antibiotic if dysentery should settled in your bowels.

Medications

Medical Identification Bracelets must be carried by anyone with chronic illness such and diabetes or heart condition. List medical diagnosis on mission information page, your team leader will need to know this information. If your taking pre-prescription medications, bring enough to last the entire trip.

Each person should also being with them an anti-nausea/motion sickness drug like Phenergan (ask your Dr) and an anti-diarrheal like Pepto Bismol. Also strongly consider bringing bug spray and sunscreen.

Jewelry

Leave it at home! We do not want to bring attention to ourselves with expensive jewelry or diamonds. Wearing a simple cross necklace can be beneficial but nothing expensive please.

Packing

Everyone is permitted one large piece of luggage weighing nor more than 50 lbs., one carry on suitcase and one backpack/purse/satchel. The airline will outline the exact dimensions if you need to check. We ask that you use the carry on and or backpack for your personal items so that we are able to use the large checked suitcase for group items or medical supplies that we have collected to go into Haiti.

In your carry on/back pack:

Passport

Color copy of your passport

Medications

Money-small bills

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Packing cont'd, in your carry on/back pack:

Toiletries, anything over 2 ounces put in a large group suitcase

Sweat rag/bandana

Refillable water bottle (fill with water after we pass security in the United States) Life straw are preferred.

Ladies: nice skirt/dress for church, everyday wear, and at least one set of scrubs (I get mine at Goodwill)

Gentlemen: nice shirt and pants for church, everyday wear and at least one set of scrubs (I get mine at Goodwill)

Comfortable walking shoes and sandals

Large

Suitcase, up to 50 lbs.,

Haiti lunch snacks (power bars, jerky, cheese & crackers etc.) enough for 5 people for 7 days

Oral rehydration salts 50 doses

Team Medical Kit

50+ 3-5ml syringes with IM needles (22 gauge)

Alcohol prep wipes

Hand sanitizer 10 bottles

Small packets of wipes, 4 packets

2 pairs of scissors

Notes:

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A few things to know about your trip...

Customs

When going through customs when entering Haiti, you will pay \$10 and be issued a “green” card that you need to have with you when departing Haiti. Tuck it in your passport. When we leave for home you will need to present this green card back the Haitian authorities.

Water

Never drink or brush your teeth with any water in Haiti except from purchased bottled water passed through another filter

Consume 1-2 gallons of purified water per day.

Personal water bottles can be refilled with Culligan purified water when available.

When we purchase bottled water out in the streets, be sure the cap is factory sealed.

Do not use ice or, drink water when showering or brushing your teeth. Rinse with purified water when brushing teeth.

Food/Meals

When first arriving you want to avoid eating salads or fresh fruit and eat only food that which has been washed properly and thoroughly cooked. Everyone is different and some will have more sensitive stomachs than others.

We will eat traditional Haitian meals and may find ourselves eating out at local restaurants. Only take what you can eat and are willing to eat. Not finishing a meal is considered an insult.

Clothing

Dress comfortable and proper. Purchase scrubs here in the US for clinic days.

We will find laundry service, otherwise washing clothes in the shower or sink does the trick.

Money

The amount of money you take will depend on your desire to help those special people that God puts on your heart. Do not bring travelers checks, they are impossible to change. We recommend bringing \$100 in cash for helping others and/or souvenirs. Do not bring bills larger than \$20. Your team leader will change money into Haitian gourdes for you when needed.

NEVER give money to anybody. Please talk with your team leader if you feel led to give. Chaos can happen very quickly and hundreds will surround you if word gets out! Many people will ask you for a dollar when we are on the streets, I shake my head no and keep moving. “Bondye Beni’ ou”, which means God bless you, in Kreyol is also nice.

In the field

Stay with the team.

Stay hydrated. Consume 1-2 gallons of purified water per day.

A team member(s) will be assigned to bring snacks (granola bars, nuts, beef jerky, dried fruit, etc.) for when the situation arises that we get hungry. A team member will also be in charge of water duty and another for our medical kit.

We will not always have access to toilets in the field. We suggest that you get in a routine of using the bathroom at the guesthouse before you leave each morning. Although you will be drinking a gallon of water or more during the day, with the weather being hot most of your hydration is sweated out. You will not need to go that often. Wipes will be with your team member who has the medical bag. If diarrhea begins, see your team member with the medical bag to begin anti-diarrheal medications immediately.

Haitians will offer us the use of their toilet. Be polite, they are offering you their best.

Communication

Adjust your cell phone to ‘Cellular Data’ OFF when we depart the U.S.

Our team will have a photographer and writer. We ask that you refrain from taking your own photos unless everyone involved is comfortable with having their picture taken. WTH uses a consent form if we plan to use the photo for marketing.

Some Wi-Fi will be available but it is limited to a 2G network. Email and Facebook may be available at times.

Coming Back Home:

We have found when we get back home we are so full of excitement and awe.

We also feel some guilt at our abundance and maybe even a bit judgmental of our culture and how we spend money and lack Godly priorities. Recognize these feelings. Begin to make changes in your own life. Pray. Share your experiences with your family, your church, your friends, your co-workers. Show them your photos, put a presentation together and ask God to help you raise awareness and funds for Haiti. Hopefully on your trip you saw very clearly how one person can impact a life.

Ephesians2:10

For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

Trip Daily Schedule

Day 1 is travel day. Meet early at the airport or designated house, flights do run on time and the airlines board passengers some-times 40 minutes before flight departure time. Fill your water bottle at the Miami airport. There are documents to fill out on our flight from Miami to Port Au Prince, the team leader will have an example filled out for you to use. Our team arrives in Port Au Prince airport in the afternoon. We will stay as a group as we go through Foreign Passport (they will request \$10 from each travel-er and the green document you filled out on the plane, team leader will be ready to pay). The green card is then in your possession for you to save through the entire trip, you will have to present this green card as we leave the country. I leave my green card in my passport. Next is Customs Declaration, have your passport and white form you filled out on the plane ready to show Customs. Be professional, we are there to help. Next we go downstairs for luggage pick up. This area has many people, some will be grabbing at your luggage trying to help so they can make a dollar. Tell them politely "No mesi." We will wait in one more line, if the guard asks you what is in the suitcase, answer "my clothes, and shoes". When we enter outside, stay as a team, and again men will be asking to carry your luggage. You response "No mesi." Our driver and translators will be waiting for us, we will follow them to the truck and load up. Drink your water. We travel from the airport to Cite Soleil to do home visits. After this is complete, and you are drinking water, we can relax and enjoy the guest-house grounds. Dinner is served by 6 (this time always varies a little). WIFI is available to communicate back home. The router is 2G so please go two at a time or it doesn't work and limit your times so others can all home. Download WhatsApp in the states to communicate for free.

From 7pm-7am a security guard will walk our premises all night. Let him get to know you, and you him.

Dinner at 6pm, please only take what you can eat. We will donate the leftover food to the house staff/cook if you guys choose.

Team meeting at 7pm, review the day, scripture and "word of the day."

Who you are rooming with is up to you. The bedrooms have multiple beds and a bathroom to share.

Our personal safety is number one, always stay inside the compound. When we are out in the truck or doing projects, stay together. If someone has to use the restroom, let the team leader know who is going with you. Never go anywhere alone please.

You can leave your spending money and passport at the guesthouse, in your room. I always leave mine out of sight, maybe in a shoe or tucked hidden inside my suitcase.

The translators will be with us the entire trip. They know the area and people. Feel free to ask them lots of questions. If you are ever in doubt, ask them, and if they say "it is OK" then you can. If the translator says "no, not good" then do not do what you are thinking. As we are out and about, use the translators to communicate to children and adults.

Day 2

Full day in Port Au Prince: Full Clinic day in Cite Soleil. Breakfast at 7am. Driver at 730am. Dress in scrubs, have ready to load your task backpacks. You are well hydrated, drinking water. (continue this for the entire trip, 1-2 gallons of water intake per day). Spray down with mosquito spray and sunblock (and throughout the day). Load medical bags, task bags, snack bags and water. On arrival at clinic, unload bags and organize supplies. There may be a line of Haitians outside already. Do not feel rushed, we will do our jobs well. A full day of assisting, teaching and helping Haitian staff. If you are not comfortable with a position, please let the team leader know about this.

Fedelin, (who you will know by now) and our team will set up benches and tables for clinic on arrival. We will have several translators with us throughout the day, so whatever job you are doing you will have a translator. The medical supplies brought into Haiti that have been organized at the guesthouse are to be unloaded and organized. Haitian women and children will be waiting outside for us to open. Drink lots of water. You already have skills, they will be used today-helping with registering patients, taking vital signs, working next to the Haitian Doctor, taking care of prescriptions, keeping the team hydrated (water, water, water) etc. We are fortunate enough to have a photographer and storywriter on this team, they will be busy.

If you are ever uncomfortable please or not feeling well please see your team leader immediately.

Snacks for lunch today, in private, then back to work. The day will wrap up about 3pm. We will all pack up and set up, clean up and leave the church the way we found it. You will have made friends in Cite Soleil, they will ask for your Facebook name and have grown fond of you. Feel free to share information, but also be cautious. Do not give money, or items to anybody. One nice act could put the whole team in danger.

If the team leader, or Fedelin, at any point during the day says "lets go" then immediately stop what you are doing, and get into the truck quickly. We leave very fast if there is even a hint of danger.

Dinner at 6, team meeting to follow. Scripture and word of the day.

Day 3

Full Clinic day in Cite Soleil with church in the streets. Breakfast at 7am. Driver at 730am. Dress in scrubs, have ready to load your task backpacks. You are well hydrated, drinking water. (continue this for the entire trip, 1-2 gallons of water intake per day). Spray down with mosquito spray and sunblock (and throughout the day). Load medical bags, task bags, snack bags and water. On arrival at clinic, unload bags and organize supplies. There may be a line of Haitians outside already. Do not feel rushed, we will do our jobs well. A full day of assisting, teaching and helping Haitian staff. If you are not comfortable with a position, please let the team leader know about this.

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If you are ever uncomfortable please or not feeling well please see your team leader immediately.

Snacks for lunch today, in private, then back to work. The day will wrap up about 3pm. We will all pack up and set up, clean up and leave the church the way we found it. You will have made friends in Cite Soleil, they will ask for your Facebook name and have grown fond of you. Feel free to share information, but also be cautious. Do not give money, or items to anybody. One nice act could put the whole team in danger.

If the team leader, or Fedelin, at any point during the day says "lets go" then immediately stop what you are doing, and get into the truck quickly. We leave very fast if there is even a hint of danger.

Dinner at 6, team meeting to follow. Scripture and word of the day.

Day 4

Full day in Cite Soleil. Breakfast at 7am. Driver at 730am. Dress in scrubs, have ready to load your task backpacks. You are well hydrated, drinking water. (continue this for the entire trip, 1-2 gallons of water intake per day). Spray down with mosquito spray and sunblock (and throughout the day). Load medical bags, task bags, snack bags and water.

We will visit 20-40 children who have been attending our English school for several months now. We will also do home visits to our telehealth patients. Stay with the group at all times. Love on the children, hang out with residents. You will have your translator with you. Do not leave the group for any reason unless you let the team leader know. This cannot be stressed enough.

We will deliver a tanker of water to the people of area 17 today. Stay with the group unless the team leader has assigned you with a translator.

If you are ever uncomfortable please or not feeling well please see your team leader immediately.

Dinner at 6, team meeting to follow. Scripture and word of the day.

Day 5

Sunday, is church and home visits in Cite Soleil. Breakfast is served by our cook by 7am. Dress in nice clothes for church (bring your shorts and tees, it is your choice to change out of church clothes this day), Each of you have been assigned a task that will support the rest of the team for example: water, snacks, Team medical bag, photographer, story writer etc. (cell phones do not work in Haiti so it is best to leave them at the guesthouse). The driver will arrive by 0800, have your assigned task and a set of scrubs ready to load. (you have already consumed close to 1 gallon of water, use the restroom before we leave). Spray down with mosquito spray and sunblock (and throughout the day).

We will attend church in the slums of Cite Soleil. We know the Pastors and have held clinics in their churches. We will attend church for an hour or more. Haitian church can run for 4 hours or more, we will only stay for a portion of the service.

After we leave the church we will visit families and friends we made. We are drinking lots of water through our Lifestraws throughout the day. We will stay as long as we can tolerate the heat and our security allows.

Dinner is served at 6pm, team meeting to follow. Swim, relax, call home, and guess what? Fluids, water, water, water!!!

After dinner for our last team meeting, the photographer and story writer will do a presentation to the team about our trip.

Day 6

Plane departs early and the airport gets full quickly. Breakfast is early and the driver arrives 3 hours before out flight time. Be prepared with your passport and green form for foreign passport. On arrival at the airport we wait in ticketing line (as we are unable to do this online because of the slow internet and we are international travel). From there we go through security (no liquids, take our computers if you have one (like the US)), then customs to show our passport and green card. Then upstairs to another security. There are only 3 or 4 gates at the airport.

Arrival in Miami we will stay as a team through customs and immigration. We have to pick up any checked luggage and recheck it also. After all this is finished, an American snack seems to delight most of us.

Re-entry in the US is different for all of us, and it can be difficult. Talk with each other, share with those who are willing to listen (some people are not interested and that's ok). Go back to your routine. Seek religious counsel.

Often teams will call a meeting one to two weeks after coming back home. It is healthy and okay to have the feelings you may have. Call each other because only another missionary will understand what you have been through.

Ephesians 2:10

For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

