SAFETY GUIDE

DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

The University of Vermont
Larner College of Medicine

May, 2018
Non-commercial use: The material in this book may be used non-commercially without written permission from Western Connecticut Health Network/University of Vermont Larner College of Medicine Global Health Program.

**Authors:** Members of Western Connecticut Health Network/University of Vermont Larner College of Medicine Global Health Program.

**Acknowledgment:** The authors would like to express their deepest gratitude to all the people who directly or indirectly contributed in preparation of this guide.

**Second Edition:** May, 2018
Table of contents

TRAVEL RULES 1
ARRIVAL AND REGISTRATION 2
DOCUMENTS 3
IN-HOSPITAL ETIQUETTE, SAFETY & NEEDLE STICK INJURY 3
IN CASE OF ILLNESS 4
TRANSPORTATION / TRAFFIC RULES 6
PHYSICAL ASSAULT 7
SEXUAL HARASSMENT 8
MONEY RELATED ISSUES 9
SEXUAL ORIENTATION 9
SHOPPING 10
SAFETY & ETIQUETTES 10
PHARMACY 11
IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS 11

ANNEXURE

PROTOCOL - POST EXPOSURE PROPHYLAXIS 16
PROTOCOL - UPON ARRIVAL TO THE HOST COUNTRY 19
PROTOCOL - IN CASE OF EMERGENCY 20
Travel Rules

Dear Participant,

Below please find a list of rules that must be followed during your elective away. Please be aware that these are rules, not guidelines, and should be followed at all times. Please review the safety guide for more details.

1. **Communication:** Someone needs to know exactly where you are at all times. If you are traveling off campus over the weekends, you must let your supervisor know exactly where you will be traveling and staying. Please also send Audree Frey an email or text with this information so that the residency knows where you are. A good guide is to meet with your site supervisor once per week to check in and discuss plans.

2. **Transportation safety:** Do not use any transportations not recommended by the site coordinator or the host family.

3. **General Health:** If you are sick, no matter how minor you feel the illness is, your site supervisor needs to be informed immediately. It is very common for travelers to make health decisions for themselves, and health can deteriorate very quickly in these settings. Let your supervisor know immediately, and further monitoring or decisions will be made from there.

4. **General Safety:** Avoid protest groups, demonstrations, and volatile situations. Do not travel alone at night.

5. **HIV Exposure:** If you think you have been exposed, take your first dose of PEP IMMEDIATELY. Do not wait to call to report this or ask for advice regarding risk stratification. Assume any exposure is a high-risk exposure and follow the protocol.
   a. Please **DO NOT PARTICIPATE** in any high-risk medical procedures, this includes cesarean sections (where you are at higher risk for a needle stick because of unfamiliarity with the country’s procedures, lack of OR experience, etc.) and also includes other emergency procedures. Please do not experiment and work on skills you are not yet comfortable with in a potentially unstable situation.
   b. Recall *The Reductive Seduction of Other People’s Problems:* “If you’re young, privileged, and interested in creating a life of meaning, of course you’d be attracted to solving problems that seem urgent and readily solvable.”

We hope and anticipate this will be an unforgettable, educational, and safe journey for you!
Every country has a certain set of rules and regulations. These rules and regulations are important to make life pleasant and safe for everyone. These regulations have been established not to limit the freedom of the participants, but for their safety. One of the most important principles of the global health is being polite and respecting the habits and traditions of people around you.

<p>| ARRIVAL AND REGISTRATION |
|---------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|
| Instructions              | Upon arrival at the airport, all visitors pay a fee of $10US to obtain a tourist card, which is valid for 3 months. If your stay exceeds 3 months then you will be required to pay a penalty fee upon departure. The amount of the penalty fee depends on how long you have stayed beyond the initial expected date of departure. |
|                           | If you are bringing medications (large supply) or surgical and medical devices, it is required that you obtain official written permission to bring them with you prior to entering the country. <em>(Please see the attached required supplementary documents)</em> |
|                           | It is possible that the customs officers will not ask for this permission, but in the event that they do request proper documentation and it is not presented, then the items will be retained in customs until the permit is presented. |
|                           | Those who approach visitors to offer assistance in carrying luggage are often looking for tips. |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Warning/Anticipated Problems</strong></th>
<th><strong>What to do in case of a problem or violation?</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>o Not having proper permission forms: Please remember that the items will be retained in airport customs until the appropriate letter is provided.</td>
<td>o Please inform your host institution and site director who will take care of the issue (see contact information).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**DOCUMENTS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Instructions</strong></th>
<th><strong>Warning/Anticipated Problems</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>o It is not recommended that you carry your passport with you while in the country. It is recommended that you keep a copy of your passport with you at all times, in case of need. Store your passport in a secure place in your residence.</td>
<td>o Loss or theft of passport</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>What to do in case of a problem?</strong></th>
<th><strong>IN-HOSPITAL ETIQUETTE, SAFETY &amp; NEEDLE STICK INJURY</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>o In case of passport loss or robbery, please contact (for US citizens) United States Embassy in Dominican Republic:</td>
<td>o In the Hospital, it is important to always wear closed shoes, trouser pants, and dress shirt. If you wear a skirt it should fall at the knee level and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o <a href="https://do.usembassy.gov/embassy/santo-domingo/sections-offices/u-s-citizenship-immigration-services-uscis/how-to-contact-us/">https://do.usembassy.gov/embassy/santo-domingo/sections-offices/u-s-citizenship-immigration-services-uscis/how-to-contact-us/</a></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
always wear a long sleeve white coat with your identification. For duty days, please wear scrubs.

- Please ensure that all tattoos are covered by clothing. Large nose piercings are prohibited as well as having long fingernails, and unusual hair colors (blue, pink etc.).
- The Hospital tends to be under-equipped, therefore, please come prepared with all physical exam tools and hand sanitizer.
- In the event that you will be participating in an intervention, please make sure you follow the proper disinfection protocols.
- Always exercise caution when dealing with needles and other medical sharp instruments.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Warning/Anticipated Problems</th>
<th>O Needle stick injury: please refer to the PEP procedure attached. See appendix.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| What to do in case of a problem? | O Contact your local supervisor as well as the global health program coordinators at WCHN/UVMLCOM immediately and follow his/her instructions.  
O Inform the Office of Occupational Health (work place as well as WCHN/UVMLCOM) in order to complete a risk evaluation.  
O In case of exposure with an HIV contaminated specimen, the Hospital will provide you with sufficient supply of the appropriate retroviral medication. |

IN CASE OF ILLNESS
| Instructions | o It is imperative that visitors traveling to DR come with proper international medical insurance.  
o The medical insurance company should provide the student a list of the affiliated hospitals in DR.  
o The 911 system works in Santo Domingo in case of emergency.  
o Get in touch with your insurance company to know which clinics and hospitals are affiliated in proximity of your residential and working place.  
o Provide to your host institution your information in case of an emergency or illness while in the Hospital.  
See appendix.  
o Avoid drinking water directly from the tap.  
o Wash your hands frequently, particularly after using the restroom, before eating, and after handling money.  
o Eat freshly prepared and well-cooked foods (meat, fish, seafood, rice).  
o Avoid buying food or drinks from street vendors.  
o Cook vegetables and peel fruits, otherwise thoroughly wash all with clean water before consuming.  
o In the event of traveler’s diarrhea, please rehydrate yourself with Oral Rehydration Solutions (ORS) while you are seeking medical advice.  
o Use an appropriate insect repellent (select one that contains 20% or more of DEET). Please reapply every 2-3 hours.  
o Products with one of the following active ingredients can also help to prevent mosquito bites. |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Warning/Anticipated Problems</th>
<th>o Diarrhea, Dengue, Chikungunya, Zika, leptospirosis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| What to do in case of a problem? | o Seek medical attention for even minor illnesses, immediately.  
|                                | o NEVER use ASPIRIN for fever (it is contraindicated in Dengue, Chikungunya, and Zika). Use ACETAMINOPHEN as antipyretics.  
|                                | o Keep yourself hydrated at all times. |

**TRANSPORTATION / TRAFFIC RULES**

| Instructions | o Always use formal public transportation (public cars, bus, and train). |
Avoid walking or using public transportation after 11 PM. For transportation so late at night directly call a taxi company or Uber.

Always use a known driver. You may ask the site director to provide a list of known and reliable taxi drivers or companies. See taxi information in the DR guide. If this is not successful then always call directly to a taxi company or Uber. Avoid taking taxis from streets, as it is both risky and expensive.

Do not drive. The WCHN/UVMLCOM Global Health Program strictly prohibits driving in Dominican Republic.

- Robbery or physical assault may occur if you take unauthorized transportation or you walk alone late at night.

In case of assault, don’t show any resistance. Give the assailant what you have. Most of the time, offenders carry guns or knives and are eager to hurt you if you show any resistance.

- File a report at the closest police station.

For more information and online forms visit:
http://www.policianacional.gob.do/servicios/

For more information regarding traffic fines and the associated fees, visit the following page:
http://www.conectate.com.do/articulo/multas-de-transito-amet-republica-dominicana/

PHYSICAL ASSAULT

- Avoid unsafe areas.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Warning/Anticipated Problems</th>
<th>Physical assault</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What to do in case of a problem?</td>
<td>In case of assault, don’t show any resistance and give the assailant what you have. Most of the time offenders carry guns or knives and are eager to hurt you if you show any resistance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>File a report at the closest police station.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>For more information and online forms visit: <a href="http://www.policianacional.gob.do/servicios/">http://www.policianacional.gob.do/servicios/</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### SEXUAL HARASSMENT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instructions</th>
<th>Sexual harassment in the street are common and almost always in the form of verbal harassments.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>If assault occurs in your place of work, please contact your immediate supervisor.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Warning/Anticipated Problems</th>
<th>Avoid wearing revealing clothing.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What to do in case of a problem?</td>
<td>Ignore verbal calls, but if it is persistent then firmly say, “Stop it”.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>If the person starts following you go into a well-lighted and busy area such as shop or a restaurant.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>For psychological assistance, contact the Dean of Student’s Office at UNIBE and request an appointment with one of their counselors. These</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
services are offered to all students without any cost from 8am-7pm, 809-689-4111.ext 1156. 1154

## MONEY RELATED ISSUES

| Instructions                                                                 |  
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---|
| o Don’t carry large quantities of cash on you.                               |   |
| o When using an ATM machine, try to use it within malls or in crowded places or on campus |   |
| o When changing dollars to local currency, always use banks or authorized currency exchange services. |   |

| Warning/Anticipated Problems |  
|------------------------------|---|
| o Robbery                    |   |

| What to do in case of a problem? |  
|----------------------------------|---|
| o In case of credit card or cell phone loss, immediately cancel your credit cards and phone by calling your USA provider company directly. |   |
| o File a report at your closest police station. |   |
| o For more information and online forms visit this page: [http://www.policianacional.gob.do/servicios/](http://www.policianacional.gob.do/servicios/). |   |

## SEXUAL ORIENTATION

| Instructions                                                                 |  
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---|
| o Based on The Dominican Constitution, every person should receive the same treatment and protection from authorities. The public and has the same liberty and opportunities without any discrimination for gender, sexual orientation, race, age, incapacity, nationality, language, religion, political or philosophical opinion. However, it is still necessary to take proper precaution and please |   |
maintain a low profile about political and sexual orientation issues.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Warning/Anticipated Problems</th>
<th>o Discrimination or violence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

| What to do in case of a problem? | o Please contact your immediate supervisor if an issue occurs.  
o For psychological assistance, contact the Dean of Student’s Office at UNIBE and request an appointment with one of their counselors. These services are offered to all students without any cost from 8am-7pm. Tel. 809-689-4111.ext 1156. 1154 |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

SHOPPING

| o Avoid buying food and drinks from ambulatory vendors where the risk of food poisoning is high. |

SAFETY & ETIQUETTES

1. Avoid wearing expensive jewelry or expensive looking jewelry (even if it is fake), using visible cameras, laptops, phones or anything that looks expensive in the streets or when you are using public transportation. This is a precautionary measure against potential theft.

2. Avoid texting or speaking by phone in a car with open windows. Motorcycle drivers, in particular, are infamous for being expert pickpockets.

3. Never take out your wallet in the street. Never put your wallet in your back pocket while using public transportation.

ETIQUETTES
Following etiquettes must be followed:

1. Politeness is a very important aspect of social interaction. When you enter a room or begin a conversation, it is polite to make a general greeting such as “buenos días”, which means "good day." Handshakes are another friendly gesture.

2. Formal introductions are rare, but professional titles are used to address respected individuals. Older and more prominent people may be addressed as Don (for men) or Doña (for women), with or without their first names.

**PHARMACY**

- If you need a medication when you are in The Dominican Republic, a prescription is not required except for certain controlled medications (including psychiatric drugs).

**Important Phone numbers:**

- **Useful Contacts in Dominican Republic**
  - Jomar Florenzán: 809-886-7887
  - Loraine Amell: Dean, International Affairs UNIBE: 829-292-6608

- If facing adaptation difficulties, you can make an appointment with a student counselor at UNIBE: 809-689-4111 ext. 1154.

- Contact details for the Embassy of the United States in the Dominican Republic:
  - USA Citizen Service: 809-567-7775; [SDOAmericans@state.gov](mailto:SDOAmericans@state.gov)

- Useful Contacts in the US
| UVMLCOM/WCHN Global Health Program Director | **Majid Sadigh**  
| | msadigh@gmail.com  
| | Cell: 203-885-8895 |
| UVMLCOM Global Health Coordinator | **Audree Frey**  
| | audree.frey@med.uvm.edu  
| | Cell: 802-656-8378 |
| WCHN Global Health Coordinators | Joanna Conklin and Laura Smith  
| | GlobalHealth@wchn.org  
| | 1-203-739-7543  
| | 1-203-739-6341 |
| Occupational Health services | University of Vermont Larner College of Medicine  
| | Department of Risk Management & Safety  
| | 802-656-3242 |
| Global Health Associate Program Director | **Mariah McNamara**  
| | +1-617-921-0739  
| | Mariah.McNamara1@uvmhealth.org |
| AUC/RUSM Global Health Program Director | **Bulat Ziganshin**  
| | bazign@gmail.com |
| AUC/RUSM Global Health Program Coordinator | **Dilyara Nurkhametova**  
<p>| | <a href="mailto:d.nurkhametova@gmail.com">d.nurkhametova@gmail.com</a> |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EMERGENCY CONTACTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Jomar Florezán 809-886-7887</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Loraine Amell 829-292-6608</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Majid Sadigh +1-203-885-8895</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Joanna Conklin +1-203-739-6341</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Laura E. Smith +1-203-739-7543</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Audree Frey +1-802-310-3156</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

AMERICAN CITIZEN SERVICES

Av. República de Colombia #57, Santo Domingo
E-mail: SDOAmericans@state.gov

Tel.: If you are an American citizen, or you are calling about an American citizen in an **after-hours emergency**, please call **809-567-7775**.
Western Connecticut Health Network, Programa Salud
Global Republica Dominicana

La información solicitada en este cuestionario es voluntaria y confidencial y no será usada para ningún propósito que no sea un caso de emergencia. The information requested in this questionnaire is voluntary and confidential and is not to be used for any purpose other than during an actual emergency.

☐ Nombre (s)/ First Name __________________________________________

☐ Apellido (s)/ Last Name____________________________________________

☐ Masculino/Male ☐ Femenino/Female

☐ Ocupación/Occupation_____________________________________________

☐ Fecha de Nacimiento/Date of Birth __________________________________

☐ Lugar de Nacimiento/Birth Place____________________________________

☐ Ciudad/País/ City/Country __________________________________________

☐ País de Ciudadanía/Country of Citizenship _____________________________

☐ País de Residencia/Country of Residence ________________________________

☐ No. Seguridad Social/Social Security No _______________________________

☐ No. Pasaporte/ Passport No __________________________________________

☐ Dirección Permanente/Permanent Address

☐ Calle Street/________________________________________ City/City _________

Estado/ State __________ País /Country __________ Código Postal/ Zip Code______________

☐ Teléfono/Telephone __________________________ Fax ______________________

☐ Correo electrónico/ E-mail ____________________________________________

☐ Peso/ Weight:______ Estatura/Height______ Color ojos , cabellos /Eye,hair Color________

☐ Marcas Particulares/Scars,marks,Tatoos_____________________________

☐ Proveedor seguro Médico/Medical Insurance provider_____________________

☐ Contacto Seguro Médico/ Medical Insurance Contact______________________
☐ Hospitales Afiliados a su seguro médico en SD/Medical Insurance Affiliated Hospitals in SD

☐ Tipo de sangre/ Blood
   Group: ______________________________________________________________

☐ Condición médica Permanente/ Permanent medical
   condition: __________________________________________________________

☐ Alergías/ Allergies: ____________________________________________________________

☐ Contacto en Instutución Anfitriona/Contact from your host Institution
   ☐ _______________________________________ Teléfono/ Telephone

☐ Correo electrónico/Email____________________________________________________

☐ Contacto/Notificación en caso de emergencia/ Contact/Notification in case of
   emergency_________________________ Parentesco/Relationship________________________

☐ Teléfono/Telephone________________________

☐ Correo electrónico/
   Email______________________________________________________________

Firma/Signature________________________________________ Fecha/Date________________________
Protocol - Post-Exposure Prophylaxis

In the case of a needle stick and other blood or body fluid exposures, which may occur while traveling and working abroad, follow the recommendations below. Please note the following:

1. It is important to run a WHAT IF scenario with your local attending or supervisor BEFORE an actual needle stick accident does happen.
2. We provide participants with a 7 day supply of PEP. If you are a medical student at UVMCOM or a resident physician with WCHN, then your PEP supply should be covered by your health insurance.

### STEPS TO FOLLOW IN CASE OF A NEEDLE STICK ACCIDENT

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Do not panic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Remove gloves and wash hands with soap and water or rinse exposed mucus membranes with water for 5 minutes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Take the first does of PEP and immediately notify your local and US supervisor (Dr. Sadigh - 203-885-8895, Dr. Molly Moore- 978-828-6558) and with their help decide if you need to continue prophylaxis (see Steps A, B, C).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>If a decision is made that you need prophylaxis, then follow their recommendation. Be aware of the potential interactions of PEP with other medicines you may be taking (including oral contraceptives).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Do rapid test on source patient. This may require consent from the patient. Discuss with your attending local regulations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Do rapid test on yourself and document the results.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Begin treatment using your supply of antiretroviral drugs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Notify UVMLCOM or WCHN (203-749-5720) Occupational Health Services.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>When you come back, get in touch with Occupational Health to get follow-up HIV testing at 6 weeks and 3 months after exposure.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
STEP A. Determine Exposure Code (EC) for Health Care Worker

STEP B. Determine the HIV Status Code (SC) for Exposure Source
**STEP C. Determine PEP Recommendations**

All students with exposure code 1, 2, or 3 who desire PEP are recommended to take the expanded regimen PEP (2 drugs).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Exposure code (EC)</th>
<th>Status Code (SC) for HIV source</th>
<th>PEP (all courses are for 28 days)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1, 2, 3            | 1 or 2                           | Truvada and Aluvia (read package inserts)  
This is the expanded regimen in your antiretroviral kit |
| 1, 2, 3            | Unknown                          | Start regimen above until source patient HIV status is known or for full 28 days if unable to find out source patient HIV status |

Your kit provides a 7-day supply of drugs. If you are advised to complete the 28-day treatment course, then there will be additional drugs available in the International Office and/or additional PEP will be shipped to you directly from Walgreen’s Pharmacy at Danbury Hospital or from the Global Health Office at UVMCOM.

### MOST COMMONLY PRESCRIBED DRUGS FOR PEP

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>COMMERCIAL NAMES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Tenofovir (TDF) 300 mg po daily</td>
<td>Viread</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Emtricitabine (FTC) 200 mg po daily OR</td>
<td>Emtriva</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Lamivudine (3TC) 300 mg po daily</td>
<td>Epivir</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Lopinavir 400 mg/ritonavir 100 mg po twice daily (two 200mg/50mg tablets twice-daily)</td>
<td>Kaletra or Aluvia</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Tenofovir (TDV) and Emtricitabine (FTC) are both nucleoside reverse transcriptase (NRT) inhibitors. They are also sold in a combined formulation called Truvada. Dosing is 1 tablet a day (TDF 300 mg and FTC 200 mg).

Lopinavir and ritonavir are both protease inhibitors. The combination of these two drugs comes is formulated under the name Aluvia. Aluvia tablets consist of 200 mg lopinavir and 50 mg ritonavir. Dosing is 2 tablets twice a day (total of 4 tablets a day).

*For the up-to-date recommendations please refer to CDC website*
Protocol - Upon Arrival to the Host Country

Please put the correct phone number in each box before your departure

Is the contact person at the airport?
Phone:

- Yes
  - Follow his/her instructions

- No
  - Contact the site program coordinator
  Phone:

  - Contact established?
    - Yes
      - Follow the instructions of the site coordinator
    - No
      - Call the site program director
      Phone:

        - Contact established?
          - Yes
            - Follow the instructions of the Director
          - No
            - Call the coordinator and program director at WCHN /UVMLCOM and follow the instructions
            Phone - WCHN:
            Phone - UVMLCOM:

        - Inform the coordinator at WCHN

Please put the correct phone number in each box before your departure
Contact the site program coordinator
Phone:

Contact established?
Yes
Follow the instructions of the site coordinator

No
Call the site program director
Phone:

Contact established?
Yes
Follow the instructions of the Director

No
Call the coordinator and program director at WCHN /UVMCOM and follow the instructions
Phone - WCHN:
Phone - UVMLCOM:

Inform the coordinator at WCHN

Inform the coordinator at WCHN