



INCREASE YOUR TRAVEL AWARENESS!

GENERAL AWARENESS

- Know your country; familiarize yourself with local conditions and laws. InternationalSOS.co, or <http://www.travel.state.gov> for specific country information.
- Register your travel with the State Department so they can contact you in an emergency (<http://travel.state.gov/travel/tips>). In an emergency, parents can reach you through the Office of Overseas Citizens Services (1.888.407.4747).
- Keep your passport with you at all times.
- Make a copy of your passport and maintain separately. Leave another passport copy and itinerary with a friend or relative.
- Pack extra eye glasses and keep additional, necessary medications and/or prescriptions available.
- Drug offenses: every year several hundred Americans are arrested abroad on drug charges. You would be subject to local laws. Ignorance of the law is no excuse. In many countries the burden of proof to prove innocence is on the accused. If you are arrested ask to speak with a consular office in the nearest U.S. Embassy or Consulate.

TERRORISM AWARENESS

- Be cautious about what you discuss with strangers or what others may overhear.
- Try to minimize time spent in the public area of an airport. After check-in, quickly relocate to a secured area. Upon arrival, leave the airport as soon as possible.
- Avoid luggage tags, dress and behavior that may draw attention to yourself
- Watch for people following you or “loiterers” observing your comings and goings.
- Keep a mental note of safe havens, such as police stations, hotels and hospitals. Formulate a plan of action for what you will do if a bomb explodes or there is gunfire nearby.
- Don’t take a taxicab that is not clearly identified as a TAXI.
- Be sure of the identity of visitors before opening the door of your hotel room or apartment.
- Be sure your vehicle is in good operating condition.
- Drive with car windows closed in crowded streets.

HIJACKING/HOSTAGE SITUATIONS

- Be aware of your surroundings. EXPRESS kidnapping is becoming more common.
- U.S. government looks to the host government to exercise its responsibility under international law to protect all persons within its territories and to bring about the safe release of hostages.
- Remain calm and alert. Control your own behavior.
- Avoid resistance and sudden or threatening movements. Do not struggle or try to escape. Don’t try to be a hero.
- Be passively cooperative. Talk normally. Do not complain. Comply with all orders and instructions.
- Try to remain inconspicuous, avoid direct eye contact and the appearance of observing your captors’ actions.
- Eat what they give you, even if it does not look or taste appealing. Keep consumption of food and drink to a moderate level. Think positively and avoid a sense of despair. You are a valuable commodity to your captors, and it is important to them to keep you alive and well.

SCAMS

- Ms. D. claims to be held against her will in a hotel for her inability to pay the bill, which she claims wasn't hers to pay in the first place. She also claims the hotel manager seized her passport and her return flight ticket to the US and would not give them back until she pays. She says that her return airline ticket is being held "hostage" pending payment of the \$500 hotel bill.
- Call into U.S. Embassy because "my finance departed Lagos via British Airways. She was detained by immigration officials. I received a telephone call from an immigration officer explaining that she had been detained due to expired documents and that they were going to hold her unless someone could pay the \$2,500 in fines for violating immigration law. After negotiation immigration officer indicated that if the funds were sent electronically then only \$1,200 would be due. I wired the funds to the office indicated (Money Store). I still have not heard back, and continue to receive a voice message from an answering machine.