Global School Safety and Health Guidelines

The Cristosal staff has created your seminar itinerary with safety as our first priority. We trust that the activities we do and all accommodations—from lodging to food to transportation—will keep you safe and healthy. We have never had a violent incident during a Global School seminar, including petty theft, nor have any participants contracted any serious illnesses beyond some stomach trouble.

That being said, Guatemala is experiencing high levels of violence, and has different standards of food safety and unfamiliar microorganisms that you may not be very resistant to. Unfortunately, getting sick is one of the common realities of international travel. Therefore, it is extremely important that you, as a participant, adhere to our guidelines regarding your safety and health to minimize your risk and maximize the value of your experience during your stay.

Please follow all instructions of Cristosal staff, and ask/consult with your Seminar Facilitator if you have any questions, concerns or comments, who is happy to work with you to make sure you get the most out of your time with us.

Security/Safety: The security situation in the country is critical and constantly changing, and is different than it was even a few years ago. Please follow the advice of Cristosal Staff at all times, because our staff and community partners we work with have a detailed understanding of the security situation in the country as a whole and in individual communities. Please follow the following guidelines during your Global School Seminar:

- Do not be flashy with valuables (jewelry, iPods, digital cameras, cash, etc.)
- Lock up your most important objects (passport, credit cards, etc.) in the safe
- Only take money you need for the day
- Always carry emergency contact information with you
- Do not leave the guesthouse after dark unless planned
- Do not leave the guesthouse alone. Always go with at least one other person, and let your Seminar Facilitator know before doing so
- If you want to go for a walk, go out in the evening or find a grocery store, consult with your Seminar Facilitator first to determine how to do so safely. These activities are possible, but trust the guidance of the Cristosal staff and your guesthouse personnel.
- We do not recommend that you leave your guesthouse at night, but are open to helping you find a way to do so safely if you like (coordinating taxis, providing advice on where is safest and what events are in the area, etc.).
- If someone does attempt to rob you, DO NOT RESIST
- Please be extremely cautious and aware when crossing streets. Pedestrians do not have right-of-way, and Cars and buses may not stop for you.
Health: Please tell your Seminar Facilitator if you start to feel bad or have symptoms (diarrhea, vomiting, nausea, etc.) so we can get you the right medicine. These illnesses aren't especially serious, but they do need treatment. Contrary to US medical belief, Cipro and Immodium are not always the best choice, though may be useful in certain circumstances. In order to minimize the likelihood of getting sick during your seminar, please review and follow the guidelines below:

Water

- Drink LOTS OF WATER, especially if you drink coffee or soda (which will dehydrate you). Guatemala is a tropical country and you may lose significantly more water to sweat than you are used to.
- Do not drink faucet water unless it has been boiled
- Coffee and tea are safe to drink because they have been boiled
- Ice from the guest house and caterers is safe, but at other restaurants it may be made from faucet water. Check with your Seminar Facilitator if you are unsure.
- Brush your teeth with bottled water.

Food

- Food from the guest house and caterers is safe, but at other restaurants or on the street it may not be clean (fruits and vegetables may not be disinfected
- Try stuff when you can—it’s part of the experience to eat new foods!

Medication, Vaccinations and Medical Expenses

- If you are on prescription medications and have any troubles related to them during the time of the trip, please let us know so we can help respond appropriately (going to a pharmacy, hospital, etc.).
- Please continue to take medication for the duration of the prescribed time; don't stop treatment because you are not at home.
- Make sure you have all routine vaccinations up to date before visiting Guatemala. In addition, it is recommended (but not required) that you get vaccinated for Hepatitis A and Typhoid. Other vaccines, like Malaria and Rabies, are optional as the risk of contracting either is extremely low. Check the [CDC’s website](https://www.cdc.gov) for the most up to date information.
- Each participant is responsible for his/her own insurance. In the case of medical emergencies, Cristosal will facilitate quality medical care in Guatemala, but does not provide medical insurance or assume the cost of any medical expenses.