

WORK TEAM ORIENTATION MANUAL



ORPHAN RESOURCES INTERNATIONAL

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Mission and Witness of Orphan Resources International (ORI)

We believe that God has called us to assist homes and organizations which look after the needs of the orphans and abandoned children of Guatemala. We believe that this is “true religion” (James 1:27). We do this by providing aid to orphanages, supplying physical necessities and other resources to help with the care of the orphans, and involving work teams to improve the facilities so that the lives of the orphans can be improved for as long as they stay in the home.

ORI is a Christian organization, and while involvement in a Christian church is not required to participate on a work team, we do expect participants to be respectful of and abide by the guidelines and expectations as set forth in this manual.

Responsibilities for ORI Work Team Participation

You will ...

1. Prayerfully consider involvement in a short-term mission team.
2. Review the team schedules and select a week which will fit into your schedule (available dates can be obtained from ORI US Team Facilitator).
3. Send *Team Member Application*, along with all other forms, signed and notarized where indicated.
4. If you are leading a group, see Group Leader Responsibilities below.
5. Obtain/update passport.
6. Get appropriate immunizations (see recommendations in Health Information or contact your local Travel Medicine health care provider).
7. Recognize that ORI is a Christian organization, and your adherence to the stated guidelines and respect for the principles of ORI and attendance at the daily devotions and other religious activities is required.

TIMELINE

Upon making initial decision

1. Let the Team Facilitator know the approximate number of persons that will be traveling with you.
2. If doing fundraising for trip, send out letters requesting donations.

Four months prior to trip date

1. Final team list is closed and sent to Guatemala Team by Team Facilitator for local coordination.
2. Begin appropriate immunizations (see *Health Information*).

3. Start “items to bring” planning (personal, gifts, tools, etc.).
4. Initiate team meetings for prayer and planning if traveling with group.
5. Submit \$500.00 for the cost of airfare to Team Facilitator.
6. Air travel reservations will be purchased by Team Facilitator.
7. Submit following items/forms to Team Facilitator:
 - a. Application
 - b. *Skills and Experience Form*
 - c. Signed *ORI Code of Conduct Form*
 - d. Signed Release and Waiver of Liability Form
 - e. Signed and notarized Parental Consent Form (if under 18)

Six-eight weeks prior to trip date

1. Meet with ORI Team Leader for orientation.
2. Receive confirmation of air travel itinerary from Team Facilitator.

Two week prior to trip date

1. Send the remaining monies due for the trip to the ORI office
2. Team packing meeting for any gifts, ministry items, tools, etc. if traveling with a group.
3. See **Packing Recommendations**.
4. Confirm land travel arrangements with Team Facilitator.

Group Size and Participation

The number of people on a group will be a minimum of 10 to maximum of 25. Any changes from this size must be approved by the Guatemala Team.

Work team dates are generally open to anyone who wishes to participate, meaning interested people will be participating in a group of different origins, but will travel and work together in Guatemala.

If you wish to reserve a date for a work team including only members of your specific group, please coordinate this with the Team Facilitator.

The *Skills and Experience* questionnaire which is completed during the application process is used as a general guide to help the Guatemala Team anticipate the type of work that a group may be effective in doing. People with highly specialized skills (computer/network techs, medical professionals, etc.) *may* have opportunity to use their skills if the team is focused on such a task. However, work is planned to allow as many people to participate as possible, and we may not be able to utilize these more specific skills. People are encouraged to become involved in the planned work projects without expecting to use specific skills.

ORI is a Christian organization. As such, certain standards and expectations are in place to protect the witness and testimony of the organization and the children with whom it works. All participants are asked to adhere to a Code of Conduct, and failure to do so, may result in the person being returned to his home community early.

All ages are welcome to participate. For younger children, it is important for the parent to remember that his/her full appreciation of the trip will be limited due to the increased need for child supervision in the new environment. Children under 14 years of age must be accompanied by a parent/guardian. Senior citizens are also welcome to participate but must be independent and able to tolerate the increased demands of higher elevation and sometimes strenuous activity of walking on steep hills, etc.

Due to the lack of lodging facilities and other places adapted for persons with limiting physical disabilities (such as wheelchairs), transportation difficulties, and such, we regretfully cannot accommodate these individuals at this time. If you have questions regarding accommodations for person with special needs, please be in contact with the Team Facilitator.

Travel and Airport Information

The Team Facilitator will make airline arrangements and stateside transportation from a local meeting place to the airport. The Guatemala Team will arrange for airport pickup and transportation within the country.

All travelers are required to have valid passports to enter Guatemala. A visitor's visa will be granted by Immigration at the airport. On the immigration paperwork you fill out on the plane prior to entry, you should check "visitor" as for the purpose of your visit and list "Guatemala City" as your destination, unless otherwise instructed by the Team Leader.

The Team Facilitator will notify the team of any specific information regarding luggage. In general each traveler is allowed one "check in" piece of luggage (maximum weight of 50 lbs, maximum size of 62 cumulative inches (length + height + width), and one "carry on" of no more than 40 lbs and 45 cumulative inches. Often a "personal item" (purse, computer bag, diaper bag, etc.) is also allowed.

For ease of transportation, all team members travel together. Any exceptions to this must be preapproved and arranged and may cause extra expense to the traveler.

You will pass through Customs after you have collected your baggage. Team members should wait until all the luggage has been collected by the members before passing on to Customs. Luggage may be randomly checked by the Customs' officials.

You will be met at the airport by Guatemala Team personnel, who will load your luggage into the vehicle and transport you to your lodging. If some of the airport personnel assist you with the luggage, they will expect to be given a tip. Your ORI team leader will be responsible for taking care of the tipping.

All travelers are required to pay an exit tax upon leaving the country. This can be paid in US or local currency (USD 3, Q 20), and must be paid after checking in for departure.

Lodging/Food/Transportation

The Guatemala Team will arrange for lodging, food, and transportation for the work teams.

Lodging

The facility you will be staying in is not owned or operated by ORI, and is rented for your team's stay. Please respect this property. Some of the facilities allow for "family rooms," while others are dormitory style settings, depending on the team size. Accommodating families or special groups together will be attempted, but is not guaranteed.

General Guidelines

1. Please respect any specific facility instructions which you may be given which are not included in the general guidelines outlined below.
2. Quiet time is 10 PM. Activities after that time should be quiet and respectful of others who may be trying to sleep.
3. Water is a precious resource and may be limited in availability. Please conserve water with bathing and other activities (*ie*: limit showers to three minutes, turn off water between soaping and rinsing, etc.).
4. Towels, washcloths, and bedding will be provided and will most likely be changed on a weekly basis only.
5. If you have allergies or sensitivities to certain types of detergents, please bring your own bedding/towels with you.
6. Electric power is standard 120 V like in the USA. Outlets are generally similar to those found in the USA as well, but bringing a three prong adaptor is recommended as some outlets may not have a ground.
7. You should bring enough clothing for the entire time without doing laundry. Hand washing of clothing is an option if necessary, but washing machines and dryers are not available for general use.
8. The septic systems in Guatemala are very problematic, so do not flush toilet paper, but put it in the appropriate trash container provided.
9. Tipping of staff is not required, but appreciated. If you wish to tip, please discuss with your ORI Team Leader for recommendations. Do not tip staff personally; this should be done as a group.
10. Alcoholic beverages and illicit drug use is prohibited.

Food

Breakfast and supper will be provided by the lodging facility. Food for bag lunches will be provided, and it is the responsibility of each member to pack their own lunch each day, unless otherwise directed by the ORI Team Leader. For the sightseeing day in Antigua, you can purchase your lunch in the city.

Special food requirements must be submitted to the Team Facilitator when signing up to participate on the team. The Team Facilitator will pass this information on to the Guatemala Team to see if these can be accommodated. Due to the lack of availability and use of local personnel for the group food preparation, some special food needs may not be accommodated.

Transportation

Transportation is on school buses, vans, or trucks provided by ORI and driven by Guatemala Team members or other hired drivers. They will be safe and functional, but not luxury vehicles.

Work Team Schedule

Work teams are typically one week long in duration, with arrival and departure occurring on Mondays. Requests for changes to this pattern need to be made to the Team Facilitator and approved by the Guatemala Team.

The day of arrival is spent traveling to the lodging facility after pickup from the airport. This is a day to go through things you have brought with you as donations, as well as a chance to rest up from travel.

Tuesday, Wednesday, and Friday are work days, planned by the Guatemala Team Work Coordinators. The team may be divided into smaller groups depending on the type of work available. All people are expected to go to the work projects and not remain at the lodging facility, unless there are specific physical reasons for not participating.

Thursday is an opportunity to visit *L' Antigua*, a historic city in Guatemala. This will be an opportunity for sight seeing, walking through the old town, trying the food at one of the restaurants (at your own cost), and purchasing souvenirs in the artisan markets.

Saturday is a flexible day which may be utilized for continued project work or visits to one or more orphanages. If the team has raised money for special donations, this is the day the gifts will be taken to the homes.

The team will attend a local church service on Sunday, and have an opportunity to visit another orphanage.

Traveling with a large group requires a significant amount of coordination, so individual requests for special activities often can not be accommodated. Also, respect for others and their schedules requires that all participants be ready “on-time” as directed.

All schedules and planned projects are subject to change, and probably will, due to the nature of life in Guatemala.

Weather and Clothing

The weather of most of the areas where you will be working will be in the 70s – 80s during the day but may be quite cool in the evening, especially during the rainy season (May to September), so sweatshirts and layered clothing will be needed.

The sun can be quite intense, and due to the elevation, sunscreen is a must, even on seemingly cloudy days.

Some of the more traditional peoples of Guatemala are very conservative in their dress style. In recognition of this, ORI requests that team members dress modestly. For women: miniskirts, shorts which are more than two inches above the knees, tight form fitting clothing, tank tops, spaghetti straps, etc., are unacceptable. For men, shirts are to be worn at all times.

There may be a pool available at the lodging facility which we use for team housing. If so, one piece swimming suits should be worn by women. Bikinis are not allowed.

Generally, older clothing is better to bring for the work projects since you may get them very dirty. For church, clean casual attire is generally acceptable, but shorts should not be worn.

For safety on the work site, sneakers or work shoes must be worn (no flip-flops or sandals).

A backpack will be very useful to carry lunches, personal items, water bottles, etc.

Personal Safety Issues in International Travel

Guatemala is a country that has come out of a civil war in recent history and is confronted with significant poverty issues, with the resultant increase in theft, etc., which is seen in many developing countries. We make every attempt possible to keep you safe during your time here by using facilities which we feel are acceptable and avoiding those areas and activities which we feel may be dangerous.

You also can help keep yourself safe by following these guidelines:

1. Do not make obvious displays of large amounts of cash or expensive items (jewelry, cameras, electronic devices, etc.)
2. Carry only the things you will need with you on any day of travel.
3. Always walk in groups of two or more, and women should not go without male companions.
4. Do not walk outside your lodging's boundaries after dark.
5. Be aware of the people around you.

6. Watch for the following activities that indicate a robbery plan:
 - Someone jostles you*
 - You are asked for directions*
 - Someone points to something spilled on your clothing*
 - Something is dropped close to you to distract your attention*
7. Bring two copies of your passport with you (notarized as being authentic copies of the original, if possible), and carry one copy, instead of your passport, with you when you travel with the team to the work sites.
8. Keep wallets, pocketbooks, backpacks, etc., in front of you and close to your body.
9. Store money and credit cards in different locations, and carry only what you need.
10. Do not take pictures of children or nationals except with permission.
11. Follow the information given in the *Health Information* section of this manual.
12. For safety reasons there will be no handing out of candy or gifts to any of the villages you may pass thru anywhere in Guatemala unless it is already prearranged before hand by our staff in Guatemala. We do realize that it is nice to be able to do so but it could cause our teams to become targets for theft. Another reason is because some children may receive more than one thing and some none and then the parents fight because it is not fair and it has caused some real major issues in the villages.

Guatemala Emergency Contact Information

Your Team Leader will have a phone which can be used for making personal calls. You are expected to reimburse for cell phone use at an amount based upon the current calling card rate.

The Team Leader's cell phone number will be available from the Team Facilitator for you to distribute to family members who may need to be in touch with you in case of emergency. For an emergency contact, you should contact the ORI office at 717-733-7444, and ask for the Team Leader's cell phone number to pass along the information.

Other telephone numbers to leave with family members for emergency contact in Guatemala are Randy Weaver, 011-502-5522-5854, or Dennis Freed, 011-502-5704-7783. These individuals will then contact the Team Leader with the information that needs to be passed along. Note these are emergency contact numbers only and are not to be contacted for information about work team, all questions are to be directed through main office.

Suggested Packing List

Clothing Suggestions:

- Short sleeve shirts for during the day(no tank tops)
- Skirts or pants
- Shorts (knee length or no shorter than 2" above the knee)
- Hat (optional)
- Socks
- Underwear
- Sneakers/ work boots
- Sweaters/sweatshirts for the cool evenings
- Long-sleeve shirts (several)
- Warm pajamas (nights are VERY cold with no heat)

Toiletries:

- Shampoo
- Conditioner
- Soap
- Sunscreen (a must, even though the weather will not feel hot!)
- Feminine products
- Tissues (small packs)
- Toothbrush and Toothpaste
- Deodorant
- Toilet paper (travel size) **Also, never flush toilet paper in Guatemala!**
- Pain medication (Tylenol, Motrin etc.)
- Waterless hand sanitizer

Misc items:

- Tape/CD player or I-Pod with extra batteries
- Camera
- Film or memory cards (lots!)
- Spending money
- Sunglasses
- Flashlight
- Bug spray
- Passport
- Photocopy of passport
- Backpack
- Wet wipes
- Rain poncho/umbrella (optional) (May-Oct teams)
- Work gloves
- Alarm clock

Orphanage Donations

Many team members enjoy bringing gifts for the children of the homes where they will be working. The following is a general list of things that are often appreciated by the children. The Team Facilitator can coordinate with the Donation Coordinator in Guatemala for specific recommendations, if desired.

Soccer balls (always a big hit in this *fútbol* country)
Other balls for smaller children
Matchbox cars
Hair accessories
Stickers
Crayons/markers
Coloring books
Children's books (especially in Spanish)
Clothes items (to be given to the orphanage directors to distribute as needed)
Balloons
Pencils/pens

Please avoid smaller items that may be a health risk for children. Even though an item is given to an older child, it may get left where a younger child can get it; avoid items that are easily put in the mouth and swallowed (or possibly choked on).

Many people enjoy bringing candy for the children. Please do this with careful discretion (most parents would not let their children have candy indiscriminately).

Cultural Differences

You will be confronted with many differences while visiting Guatemala. Most North Americans find these very frustrating. The following was written by a Guatemalan for visitors to an orphanage. She makes some helpful observations.

- You **HAVE** to say thanks for almost everything; otherwise you'll be taken as impolite.
- Timing? There is not such a thing as timing in Guatemala (or Latin America in general). We even have our own time, the "hora chapina", which means 20-30 minutes later than the time you agreed. If you are an "always on time" person you will need to be flexible a little and not lose your mind. They will come... not on time; and always with an excuse... but they will come!
- Latinos are people persons, not work driven persons. If a Latino is running to get to some place but finds a friend in the way, he/she will stop and chat... then he/she will be late, and will blame it on the traffic. Because of the same reason of being people persons, they will ask you almost everything about your life, sometimes because they want to make you feel fine, sometimes because they are nosy. The most common questions would be...
 - Your age
 - Your family (how many brothers and sisters)

-- *Why in the world are you here and voluntarily left “The land of the free and the home of the brave”?*

-- *Profession (what is that; why did you choose it?)*

-- *Hobbies, favorite foods*

-- *Latinos are very expressive and will kiss and hug you. They will greet you very affectionately even if you just talked to that person at the phone three minutes before. Girl to girl and boy to girl “hello and goodbye” kisses are not just viewed as right; they are almost mandatory.*

-- *Surviving is something every Latino in his/her own country has to do every day. We are not cheap (most of us, at least) but we do take good care of the things we have. Wasting is not very common for us. We don’t change our closet with the seasons, (this may be because we are a third world country and we just have the right to two seasons and our weather doesn’t change that much). We use things until they are almost broken.*

-- *Latinos are very warm and will try to make you feel at home. I have a British friend who thinks every Guatemalan guy who has ever talked to her has a crush on her, which is not true. Be careful with this, though. Do not talk to unknown men on the streets. A “no hablo español” will help you to get out of uncomfortable situations.*

-- *Men are rude sometimes and they will yell “compliments” or whistle to you on the streets. Do not turn and pay attention to them. They do that to almost every woman they see.*

-- *The word “love” is very strong for us. In English you “love” pizza. In Spanish you try not to say I love you (te amo) to people from the opposite sex or you can be misunderstood. If you get really close to someone of the opposite sex, try using “te aprecio mucho” (I appreciate you) instead.*

-- *Sometimes for us (I would say a lot, actually) it is not what you say, but the way you say something that matters. You have to be careful with body language.*

-- *Food! It’s different all the way (with the exception of fast food stuff). Ours is very seasoned and a little spicy sometimes. Whenever you finish your meal, someone will say one of these two: “muchas gracias” or “buen provecho” (boo-ehn pro-vey-cho). The first one means “thank you very much” and is said by the people as they finish their meal. It doesn’t matter if it is the owner of the house or the guest. The second one means something like “I hope it serves you well” and even though it started as the answer to the first one, it can be used either way. So if you are told “muchas gracias,” answer “buen provecho” and vice versa... always with a smile!*

-- *It’s hard for Latinos to have an “A to Z” plan. We improvise more than Americans and usually our “Plan B” is also an improvised one too. Please be patient with this. If it looks like we have no clue of what we are doing... it may be true! This applies especially when you go out for fun or working in teams.*

-- *Do not flush the toilet paper. Use the garbage basket. Why? It seems that if you throw it in the toilet, it will get plugged and make a flood because of the way the water pipes are built.*

Adapted from *James Project of Latin America* team manual, with appreciation.

Financial Issues

The cost of participation in a work team will cover your airfare, ground transportation, lodging, food costs, as well as a temporary international health insurance. The participation cost also includes an amount of money to fund some of the projects that you will be working on during your stay in Guatemala. The participation cost may vary from team to team due to the cost of airfare. The Team Facilitator will give you the final cost.

Fundraising

Many people are often willing to support your participation on a work team through ORI. You can invite people to help sponsor you by a personal letter explaining what you are doing, when you are traveling, giving a little bit of information about ORI, and explaining what you hope to accomplish on the trip. If you need more specific information, contact the Team Facilitator at the ORI office.

Your church may be able to collect the monies for you and issue tax deductible receipts for your donors and then submit the monies to ORI by the deadline. If your church cannot assist you in this manner, contact the Team Facilitator about how to obtain tax deductible receipts for your donors.

If you are part of a larger group, your Group Leader will help you with these details and collect and arrange for the funds to be transferred to ORI.

Personal Money

You may bring money along for personal expenses (should be minimal) and souvenirs if you wish to purchase them.

The Guatemalan currency is the *quetzal*, with an exchange rate that varies daily (ask the Team Facilitator for an estimate of the current exchange rate). US dollars can be changed at the local banks, or local currency can be obtained by using a debit or credit card at one of the ATMs which are available.

Change only the money that you think you will want to use, as you will lose money by a less than favorable exchange rate when you change money back from *quetzales* to dollars.

Be sure to notify your bank or credit card company before you travel so that your cards will not be rejected for an out of country use.

Some of the vendors in the markets, shops, and restaurants will accept credit cards. Some will accept US dollars as well, but the exchange rate may be less than favorable than at a bank.

Travelers' and personal checks are not accepted.

Directed Donations

Sometimes groups wish to raise money for a special project to use in addressing needs. ORI is willing to assist in channeling the funds to Guatemala with the money being sent to the Team Facilitator for record keeping. The Donation Coordinator will assist you with the purchase of items or distribution of the funds in Guatemala. The Team Facilitator can contact the Donation Coordinator for suggestions for special projects and needs orphanages may have. *These funds are monies raised over and above the team participation fee that you must pay to be part of a team.*

Insurance

Travel insurance is purchased as part of the team participation costs. Specific coverage information is available from the Team Facilitator.

Tipping

At the facility you are staying, many staff are working together to make your stay comfortable. It is customary and gracious for visitors to give a tip to the staff at the end of their time there. It is recommended that an amount of USD 5 per person be given to the ORI Team Leader, who will then present the money collected to the staff. To ensure that all staff are treated fairly, do not give individual staff members gifts or tips.

When eating at restaurants, a tip is often included in the amount charged, but it is acceptable to leave an additional tip on the table if you wish.

INTERACTION WITH CHILDREN

It is easy to fall in love with the children you will be meeting in the homes. The children will reciprocate your attention with eagerness. One of the biggest contributions you can make to the lives of these children is your love and affirmation.

It is important to remember that many of the children you will be working with have already experienced many things in life that have impacted them in the negative way. All have been separated from their parents and families, either through legal proceedings, death, abandonment, or due to socioeconomic factors. Many of them have suffered abuse of some form (physical, sexual, emotional, neglect, etc.). The human spirit is often resilient, and many of them have learned to cope with their life experiences, sometimes with patterns of behavior which are inappropriate. These are some of the things that the directors and staff at the homes are working to change.

Children absorb the love and attention you give them. Often, we feel sorry for them and do things that we think will make them feel better but may not be appropriate methods of

interacting with them. The following are suggestions to make your time with the children more effective and helpful.

- Don't be afraid to show them love, even the ones with physical, developmental, or behavioral problems.
- Play simple, age appropriate games to get them to interact with you (UNO, a matching game, etc.).
- Side hugs, especially for the older girls, are more appropriate than full frontal contact.
- Roughhousing is ok, as long as the child is not in danger and it is done in conjunction with other forms of contact and interaction.
- If a child is beginning to get too "clingy" or physical with you, look for other ways to interact that decrease the need for physical contact (games, going for a walk, etc.).
- Any potentially sexual related contact by the child (touching of genital area, thighs, breasts, etc.) is to be immediately stopped and the child redirected.
- Try to avoid intense emotional attachment to a child (easy said—often hard to do), not only for your sake but also for the child.
- Look for the child that sits alone, or is less outgoing and interactive; they need attention and love as well.
- Do not make any promises of gifts, future benefits, etc.
- Be aware of and avoid feeding into any emotional games the child may play to try to get more attention (being "pouty," playing hard to get, etc.).
- Think of how you can encourage the child to develop positive interaction patterns with others.
- Talk to the child. Even if you do not know Spanish, speaking in simple word patterns, with demonstrative gestures, will often get your point across. (Also, do not assume the child does not understand English—many children have learned some English from their interaction with visitors.)
- Children love to play with your cell phones, MP3 players, cameras, and other electronic devices, but it is best not to allow them to do so. They may get lost or taken, accidentally broken, or inappropriately used. It is ok to show the child your pictures, but control the situation by holding the camera in your hands.
- Gift giving guidelines:
 - -- When you give a gift to one child, give a gift to all. Do not "pick and choose."
 - -- Be sure the gift is age appropriate and will not cause a problem if picked up by another child of younger age (*ie*: small rubber balls are choking hazards).
 - -- Kids love candy, but it tends to make them hyper and destroy their appetite. One piece of candy per child is best.
- If a child is being punished for some reason, do not intervene or interact with that child until you have received permission to do so from the home's staff.
- If you have any questions as to what is appropriate, speak to a staff member (if possible), one of the Guatemala Team members, or your ORI Team Leader.

Children need love, no matter where they live in the world. Showing them this love and attention by interacting with them in ways that are healthy, wholesome, and encouraging will help the children develop good relationships and help them experience healing from past hurts.

Health Information

The major health challenges can be divided into three categories: (1) food and water, (2) bugs and bites, and (3) body fluids. While this information is not meant to be exhaustive, it will give you the basic information you need to improve your chances of staying healthy while in Guatemala.

FOOD AND WATER

This is by far the biggest challenge. We all like to experience new foods, and we all need water to survive. Many diseases are easily transmitted by food and water, usually through contamination of the water source or mishandling of food.

Remember that PREVENTION is the best form of treatment. Using the following techniques will significantly decrease your risk.

1. Drink only clean water. (Clean water is water that has been purified in some fashion through ultraviolet light, filtration, boiling, or chemical treatment).
2. Avoid eating food from street vendors.
3. Sodas, fruit juices, and water in bottles or cans are safest (avoid fountain drinks).
4. Wash hands carefully before handling food or eating. If water and soap are not available, a hand sanitizer is an acceptable alternative.
5. Avoid fresh fruits and raw vegetables (including lettuce) that you have not cleaned yourself (or been prepared by someone you trust).
6. Hot drinks (coffee, teas, etc.) are usually safe because they have been boiled as part of the preparation process.
7. Don't brush your teeth with tap water (and don't sing in the shower).
8. Ice is considered not safe unless you are sure it has been prepared with clean water.
9. Remember, your water bottle can be your worst enemy. It should be cleaned each day and allowed to air dry. Avoid bottles with the pull top/twist top nozzles (they get very dirty and so you contaminate your water when you drink from it). Water bottles that require twisting the cap off to get a drink are safest.
10. Avoid undercooked meat products.

Most food and water transmitted infections affect the gastrointestinal tract. The most common infections from food and water are discussed below.

1. Hepatitis A is found in many developing countries of the world, including Guatemala. It is a viral infection of the liver which can be symptom free fatal (very rare and usually only happens in people who have other severe health problems). Most

people who develop Hepatitis A have a couple weeks of fatigue, a yellow color to the skin (jaundice), very dark brown urine, skin itching, and white bowel movements. Blood tests will reveal presence of the virus in the blood stream and show the liver tests are elevated. No medications are available for treatment of this infection and most people recover without any problems.

2. Traveler's diarrhea (affectionately known as the Guatemala Gallops) is a typically self limited gastrointestinal infection characterized by 24-48 hours of diarrhea or looser stools, belly cramping, and maybe nausea and vomiting. It is not usually accompanied by fever or bloody stools. Use of Pepto-Bismol, Imodium, or similar agents to control the diarrhea and clear liquids to maintain hydration is usually adequate for treatment.

3. Dysentery is a severe form of traveler's diarrhea and may be accompanied by bloody stools, severe abdominal pain, fever, and generally persists more than 48 hours. It is often due to a bacterial or protozoan infection of the gastrointestinal tract. In addition to the treatment discussed above for traveler's diarrhea, antibiotics are often used to treat this infection.

BUGS AND BITES

Insect bites will occur anywhere in the world. Fortunately most of these bites are more of a nuisance than dangerous. Good quality bug sprays with DEET are recommended when you are going to be working in an area with a lot of bugs (rural communities where there is standing water or high grass, etc.). If you have been in the woods or high grass you should check for ticks each day. If you have an allergy to bee stings, be sure to carry your emergency medicine with you since emergency care may not be readily available.

One way to minimize your risk for bug bites is to pre-treat your clothes with Permethrin (also called permethrin), which is available as a canned spray in most places where hunting goods are sold. It is also good to bring the spray can with you in your checked luggage and use it on the curtains, bed sheets, etc. in the room where you will be staying to decrease your risk of night time bites. This spray is effective for ALL bugs, not just mosquitoes.

BODY FLUIDS

HIV (the virus that causes AIDS), Hepatitis B and Hepatitis C, are the most common diseases transmitted through blood and body fluids. Of these, there is an immunization available for Hepatitis B only, and immunization is encouraged.

The greatest risk of transmission of these diseases occurs when blood or genital secretions from an infected person enters an open wound on another person. This may be from accidental contact, sharing of contaminated medical equipment (needles, etc.), blood products given through transfusion, or sexual activity.

There is no evidence that Hepatitis B or C or HIV is transmitted through sweat, urine, feces, saliva, tears, or casual contact (holding/hugging, etc.).

If there is a potential for contact with blood of any person, wearing gloves will prevent the transmission of the virus. While gloves may be worn for aesthetic purposes while changing diapers, etc., they are not necessary if good hand washing and general hygiene techniques are followed.

IMMUNIZATIONS/PROPHYLAXIS RECOMMENDATIONS

The following immunizations are recommended for all travelers to Guatemala:

Absolutely essential before travel:

1. Tetanus update within past 5-7 years.

Highly recommended

1. Hepatitis A. This is a series of two shots. The first shot should be given six weeks before you travel, and the second shot six months after the first one. Immunity lasts at least 10 years.
2. Hepatitis B. This is a series of three shots, with a booster given one month and six months after the first shot. This is strongly recommended for health care workers or those who will be living at and working intimately with children of an orphanage.

Recommended for consideration, but generally not required for Work Team participation:

1. Measles, mumps, rubella booster (discuss with your health care provider)

Shots your doctor may recommend **but are not necessary** as we do not travel to the areas where these are needed.

1. Typhoid
2. Malaria
3. Rabies

GENERAL HEALTH MAINTENANCE

When you treat your body well, your risk of infection/illness is much less. Make sure you get enough sleep, keep yourself well hydrated, eat well and safely, use sun block, allow your body to adjust to the higher altitudes before exerting yourself too hard, and take rest breaks when needed. If you need to take any medications regularly, make sure you take them along with you because they may not be available there. Any open wounds should be cleaned with drinkable water and soap and topical antibiotics applied if necessary. If the wound could get dirty, keep a dressing on it until it has scabbed over well. Carry hand sanitizer and use it liberally. And don't forget to carry toilet paper—many public restrooms don't have any.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

If you have more questions about health issues that you may face in your travels to Guatemala, please feel free to contact us. An online source for more information is www.cdc.gov/travel, and choose your destination as Guatemala. Please note that the website takes a very pessimistic look at travel (talking about all the things that could go wrong), but gives the most up-to-date information available to the medical community.

Don't forget that when you travel where God has called you, you rest in His protection and care. That is bigger than any immunization you could ever get.