



3451 Via Montebello #192, Suite 502, Carlsbad, CA 92009

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Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

I would like to know more before I sign up...

- 1) How do you decide where teams will serve?
- 2) Who leads the medical teams?
- 3) What is included in the cost of the medical mission trip?
- 4) Why is the cost of the medical mission trip so expensive?
- 5) Is my donation to MSI tax deductible?
- 6) How can I help fund my trip?
- 7) May other people make donations to MSI to help pay for my trip?
- 8) Does MSI have any paid staff?
- 9) What does a typical a clinic day look like?
- 10) What do I need to do to prepare for a medical mission trip?
- 11) I am not a medical professional. Can I still participate?
- 12) What will happen if I have a medical emergency overseas?
- 13) Are there any special guidelines for behavior while on the trip?
- 14) Is MSI affiliated with any specific church denomination?
- 15) Is there time for rest and relaxation? And shopping?
- 16) Is there a visa fee for entering a country? Is there an exit fee for leaving?
- 17) Is the trip donation refundable?

1) How do you decide where teams will serve?

Medical Servants International (MSI) only serves in areas where the local pastors, missionaries, or health care providers have invited us. We are committed to working alongside the in-country professionals who best know the needs of their people and communities, and who are willing to do the preparatory work necessary to host a medical team.

We prepare with these in-country professionals usually a year in advance to ensure we can meet the area's needs and that the accommodations and transportation will be appropriate for our MSI team.

Missionaries, pastors, or health care professionals who are working in areas with little access to health care and are interested in hosting a medical team may contact MSI at John@medicalservantsinternational.org.

2) Who leads the medical teams?

Every MSI team is led by at least two MSI-appointed individuals - each of whom has at least 10 years of experience in leading short-term medical mission teams. These individuals are knowledgeable in the logistics of international travel and customs, as well as the operations of medical clinics in rural settings. Their main focus is the safety of the medical team.

3) What is included in the cost of the medical mission trip?

Your donation covers airfare, in-country room and board and transportation. Your donation also helps cover the cost of the medicines and medical supplies needed to operate the medical clinic. Medical insurance that provides for medical evacuation if necessary, is also included. A time of rest and relaxation is also included in the cost of most trips – see specific trip details for additional information.

4) Why is the cost of the medical mission trip so expensive?

MSI purchases over \$5000 worth of medications for each trip. Medicines that are not dispensed to patients during our clinics are usually left with medical professionals in country for their future use. The cost of our trips includes the purchase of these medications. In addition, we provide stipends to those in-country colleagues who assist us in our clinics.

5) Is my donation to MSI tax deductible?

Yes, your donation to MSI for a medical mission trip is completely tax deductible. We are an IRS approved 501(c)(3) non-profit charity. We will provide you with a receipt for the IRS In the January following your trip. For additional information on charitable deductions when traveling, please see the IRS information at: <https://www.irs.gov/newsroom/tips-to-keep-in-mind-for-taxpayers-traveling-for-charity>

6) How can I help fund my trip?

We do not want you to be deterred by the cost of the trip. There are many ways to help provide the funds for your trip, so please contact the MSI office for specific suggestions. In addition, your family and friends may make tax deductible donations to Medical Servants International to help with scholarships for team members. Your church may also donate on your behalf or you may want to organize a fund-raiser. Note, it is most important that donations from others for your medical mission trip be by check made out to '**Medical Servants International**', if the donor wishes a tax deduction for the donation.

7) May other people make donations to MSI to help pay for my trip?

Yes, donations can be given to MSI to help cover the expense of your medical mission trip. Please have your family members or friends mail a check to the MSI office and include a separate note that states the donation is to help with your trip. To obtain tax deduction, the check must be made out to '**Medical Servants International**'. A receipt will be sent at the end of the fiscal year.

If donations for your medical mission trip is made through a donor-assisted fund, the donor needs to indicate to the fund manager that the donation is for the 'General Fund'. MSI will then apply it to your medical mission trip.

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8) Does MSI have any paid staff

No, all of our leaders work on a completely volunteer basis. We have no paid staff nor do any of our leaders receive any subsidies for medical mission trips.

9) What does a typical a clinic day look like?

The team usually wakes at 6 a.m., has a time of morning devotions and prayer, followed by breakfast. Then the team travels by bus or van to the village where the clinic will be held – usually a 1 – 2 hour ride. Clinic can be set up in approximately 45 minutes as suitcases carrying medical and clinic supplies are dispersed to the various stations. Patients pass through the following stations:

1. Registration - where each patient receives a medical record
2. Triage /Vital Signs - where each patient has height, weight, temperature and other appropriate vital signs taken
3. Health Education - patients receive health education while waiting to see the medical providers
4. Medical Providers / Dentist - patients are triaged to the appropriate station depending upon their needs
5. Treatment and Diagnostics - diagnostic testing such as urinalysis, urine pregnancy, malaria and blood glucose available as well as nebulizer treatments and injectable medications
6. Prayer and Counseling - every patient is offered prayer and counseling with local pastors present

7. Pharmacy - patients receive vitamins, along with appropriately dosed medications as prescribed by health care providers
8. Reading glasses / Flip-Flops/ etc. - there may be a station for these depending upon clinic location and staffing

The clinic usually closes by 4 p.m. to allow for clean up as well as return travel during daylight hours.

10) What do I need to do to prepare for a medical mission trip?

PASSPORT - You will need a passport with at least 3 blank pages for visas. The passport's expiration date needs to be at least six months AFTER the end of the trip.

IMMUNIZATIONS - You may need additional immunizations before you travel. MSI will send out information to team members advising you on the CDC guidelines. We also encourage you to discuss your travel plans with your primary care physician or a travel clinic. Please start this process early to make sure you have time to receive any needed immunizations.

MEDICATIONS – Please discuss your travel plans with your primary care physician and obtain sufficient quantities of any prescriptions you normally take. Also request medications appropriate for international travel.

TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS - MSI will make all the travel arrangements for you and every member of our team. We will make the flight reservations, arrange for room and board, as well as any transportation while in country. We will also make all necessary arrangements for the R&R portion of the trip.

11) I am not a medical professional. Can I still participate?

We need you! Teams are made up of many people who are not health care providers. You can register patients and assist with patient flow. In addition, we can train you to take vital signs, dispense eyeglasses, treat children's teeth with fluoride, and provide appropriate health education using our pictographic charts. You may also assist in prayer and counseling if you wish to do so.

12) What will happen if I have a medical emergency overseas?

MSI provides each team member with medical emergency care insurance that will also cover your transportation back to the United States. Prior to traveling you will receive the appropriate insurance documents that will cover you during the dates of the mission trip.

13) Are there any special guidelines for behavior while on the trip?

MSI will provide you with very specific information and guidelines to help you stay healthy while on the trip. We follow the CDC guidelines for food and water – available at wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/page/food-water-safety

We also ask that all team members understand that we must be sensitive to the culture of the country we are visiting. We ask team members to avoid from smoking, drinking, using drugs, and public display of affection. We also request all clothing to be modest.

When the accommodations allow for two people to be in one room, in keeping with our commitment to maintaining Biblical standards, unmarried couples will not be roomed together.

14) Is MSI affiliated with any specific church denomination?

MSI is not affiliated with a specific denomination, and our leaders attend different evangelical churches. We agree with our Statement of Faith, but understand that there are minor differences between denominations that are not felt to be relevant to our ministry.

15) Is there time for rest and relaxation (R&R)? And shopping?

Yes. Most trips allow for 1 - 2 days of R&R. These arrangements depend upon the country in which we serve as well as the flight schedule that provides for the least expensive plane fare.

16) Is there a visa fee for entering a country? Is there an exit fee for leaving?

Airport exit fees are most often already accounted for in the cost of the airline flights. If not, MSI will pay for any exit fee.

If the country requires a visa, MSI will inform you of this. Visa fees are also included in the cost of the trip.

17) Is the trip donation refundable?

GOOD FAITH DEPOSIT: A \$200 non-refundable deposit is required at the time of acceptance as a sign of your commitment to join us on a medical mission trip. If MSI cannot include you on the requested medical mission trip because of team size/composition limitations, your deposit will be refunded.

MSI CANCELLATION OF TRIP: If an outreach is cancelled by Medical Servant international due to extenuating circumstances (e.g., US State Department warnings, airline strikes), MSI will notify you of how much recovered cost is possible. You will then have the option of either directing your contributions toward another outreach in the subsequent 12 months or requesting a return of contributions to you and your sponsors.

TEAM MEMBER CANCELLATION OF TRIP: If, at any time, you cancel your registration on an outreach, contributions made to that date will not be refunded to you nor applied toward a future outreach. Please keep in mind that medication purchases and airline tickets are purchased early, they typically are not refundable, and these costs make up a majority of the trip cost.