

# Haiti Travel Information



Haiti is a Land of extremes. It remains one of the world's poorest countries in economic terms but one of its riches in cultural heritage. Haitian art and food reflect the country's French, Caribbean, and African influences. For all their cultural wealth, Haitians have suffered almost constantly from oppressive regimes, foreign invasions, and internal strife since Columbus landed on the island over 500 years ago. It is remarkable that even as disorder continues to plague Haiti, Haitians continue to show great resilience, which is most evident in their rich living culture. (Cultures of the World Haiti, pg. 5 by Marshall Cavendish Benchmark)

You will be experiencing a different culture than your own. Please familiarize yourself with this travel document so that you will be able to show courtesy and respect to our Haitian friends, as well as, have all of the travel information that you will need for the trip.

**\*\*Note:** Please print a copy of this brochure for reference during the trip.

Mission trips to Haiti through FHG afford the opportunity to serve God with others and grow in relationship with others in a wonderful way. You can be sure that you will be blessed for each moment you serve the children, staff and those we encounter in our outreach missions.

For His Glory mission trips seek to take advantage of the natural gifting of the missionaries. There are always projects that need to be accomplished at the orphanage and in our outreach missions. This means that we will have projects on the Itinerary that we seek to accomplish while at the same, surveying the natural talents described in your application to build our team around the strengths of those that make up the team.

This underlines the importance of us receiving your application when it's due so that we can work on our side to create the best outline for the projects of your team. From the mom that wants to rock babies to the seasoned overseas construction missionary, there is a place for everyone!

The following information is important for you to review and be familiar with. Please be sure to make notes in the margins of any questions you may have before we have our training call. This will ensure that your team will be well prepared for your trip.

We are so excited that you have decided to be part of one of our teams in Haiti! The children and staff thank you in advance for your service and sacrifice in coming to share your time with us!

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## **Cost:**

### **Hotel:**

Habitation Hatt Hotel

509-3-452-9480

[www.habitationhatt.com](http://www.habitationhatt.com)

### **Excursions:**

Excursions will be optional and paid for at the time of the excursion.

### **Airfare:**

Travelers are responsible for making and purchasing their own airfare. FHG will give arrival and departure of flights. This allows for flexibility for travelers as well as allows consolidated pick up and drop off at the airport saving on transportation costs.

### **Trip Application Fee:**

The \$350 per person **non-refundable** trip fee covers but is not limited to, transportation to and from the airport, daily transportation for the group during your stay, security, lunches at the orphanage, orphanage donation and other expenses that the orphanage incurs when hosting mission teams.

**Final application fees are due 30 days before travel.**

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## **Immunizations:**

Please check with your healthcare provider to make sure that you have proper immunizations.

For a complete list go to <http://www.cdc.gov/travel/caribbean.htm#vaccines>

It is strongly recommended that travelers are current on Hepatitis A and Hepatitis B, Tetanus, and Typhoid vaccinations. As well as, have medication for Malaria.

For more immunization information and a medical facility that specializes in international travel go to <http://www.passporthealth.com/>

**\*\*\*NOTE\*\*\* If you do not have these vaccinations and plan on obtaining them prior to travel, please allow yourself four weeks following immunization to obtain full effect of the vaccine.**

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## Passport:

A current passport is required for **all** travelers.

For U.S. passport information go to: [http://travel.state.gov/passport/passport\\_1738.html](http://travel.state.gov/passport/passport_1738.html)

Temporary Visas may be required for those who are **not** U.S. citizens entering the U.S. For more information: [http://travel.state.gov/visa/visa\\_1750.html](http://travel.state.gov/visa/visa_1750.html)

**\*\*\*\*Important\*\*\*\* Please make a photocopy of your passport and carry it in a separate place from your passport.**

**If you do not already have a passport, please allow yourself a minimum of six weeks prior to travel to obtain one. \* Due to new passport laws this time has increased up to 5 months.**

\* You do not need to carry your passport with you while in Haiti unless you want to. You can carry a photo copy and leave your passport in a safe place.

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## Embassy Registration for U.S. Citizens:

It is recommended that you register with the U.S. Embassy in Haiti. This can be done online at: <https://travelregistration.state.gov/ibrs/>

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## Travel Health Insurance:

Most insurance does not cover international travel. Please check your policy before travel to confirm that you have health insurance. International travel insurance can be bought for a small fee and is for the duration of your travel abroad. Travel health insurance can be purchased online and there are many sites available.

<http://www.eglobalhealth.com/>  
<http://www.missionaryhealth.net/>  
<http://www.gomissiontrip.com/>  
<http://www.globalhealthinsurance.com>

**\*\*\*For His Glory strongly recommends that all travelers purchase Mission Trip Insurance\*\*\***

**A copy of your mission trip insurance must be sent along with your Mission Trip Application.**

**\*\*\*Important Note\*\*\* If you do not purchase travel health insurance you must sign the insurance waiver on your Mission Trip Application. Travelers that waive insurance will not be permitted to travel without a waiver signature.**

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## Travel Funds:

It is recommended that you do not carry large denominations of money with you. You will need \$1 bills for tipping in Haiti. \$300 in cash is a sufficient amount of money for incidentals on the trip. Credit cards are accepted at the hotel.

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## Airport Travel:

### Miami:

**\*\*\*Very important\*\*\*** Please tie a pink and yellow ribbon large enough to spot from 15 feet away on each of your bags.

Due to security measures airlines frequently change procedures. Please check with the airlines for current luggage restrictions regarding carryon and checked baggage as well as required airport arrival time.

If possible please check your bags through to Haiti.

If you are traveling with a team, when meeting your travel leader at the gate in Miami please **be on time and let your travel leader know the number of bags you are traveling with.** \*\* Please give your travel leader \$3-4 per checked bag when you meet in Miami.

- **Immigration & Customs Form:**

On the plane you will be given an Immigration form and a customs form. You do not need to claim personal medication. **You will need your passport number, and flight number as well as a pen. Please keep this information in an easily accessible place. You will need to indicate the length of stay which is how many days. Location of stay is the Habitation Hatt Hotel in Delmas 31, PaP, Haiti.**

### Haiti:

This will likely be a new experience for most travelers.

Once in Haiti you will deplane on the tarmac and walk to the gate. Please stay with the group.

- **Proceed to Immigration:** You will need your Immigration & Customs Form that you filled out on the airplane and your passport.
- **Baggage Claim:** Once you have cleared Immigration you will proceed to the baggage claim area. Luggage carts are available for a \$2 rental fee.

After you have gathered all of your luggage from the baggage claim area please let your travel leader know.

- **Customs:** You will need your claim tickets and Immigration forms. Please stay in a group and proceed through customs.
- **Transportation:** Your travel leader will handle all interaction with drivers once the group has cleared customs. Stay together with the group. There may be loud and heated conversation

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going on at this time. It may seem chaotic. Please remain calm. DO NOT get in the van until your travel leader tells you to do so. Please drink water so that you don't get dehydrated.

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## **Hotel:** Habitation Hatt Hotel:

- **Etiquette:**  
Please be patient and kind to the hotel staff. Please be quiet after 10 PM. Please do not consume alcoholic beverages.
- **Phones:**  
Some U.S. cell phones will not work in Haiti. Please check with your provider to see if you have international service. If you need regular contact with the U.S., cell phones can be purchased at the airport and phone cards are available for purchase. If you have a laptop you may want to look into setting up a Skype account before you arrive in Haiti.
- **Email:**  
You may also want to download and set up an instant messenger program on your personal computer. You will have access to wireless in the restaurant area of the hotel for your laptops.
- **Tipping:**  
It is appropriate and recommended to tip the hotel staff. \$1 per bag and \$1 for daily maid service, meal tips \$2 per meal.
- **Electricity:**  
Electric outlets are the same as in the U.S. No special outlet adapters are needed. There are sometimes power outages a flash light is handy to have in case this happens.
- **Personal Property:**  
Your luggage and personal items are safe at the hotel. We have never had anything stolen. Be sensible about leaving things lying around. Shoes and toys left at the pool unattended will be gone.
- **Air conditioning:**  
Your room is air conditioned in the evenings. Some rooms have A/C during the day.
- **Laundry**  
You can wash out laundry in your shower and hang it to dry in your shower. Be sure to bring laundry soap and hangers with you if you choose to wash out clothes in the shower. A pressure rod is handy to take to hang clothes on to dry.
- **Drinking Water & Food:**  
Drinking water is provided in the refrigerator in your room. DO NOT drink the water from the faucet or use faucet water to brush your teeth. If you need refills for drinking water please take your water container to the bar to be refilled. All food at the hotel is safe for consumption. There are small refrigerators in your room.

\*\*\*NOTE\*\*\* Try not to drink too much soda and avoid too much sugar. Soda will dehydrate you and sugar will weaken your immune system. Please keep this in mind for your children also.

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## Personal Etiquette:

- **Dress:**  
Dress modestly. Swimwear should be modest. We ask that women do not wear bikinis as it does not support what the children in the orphanage or taught, or what we would like our teams to represent. For men, please wear loose fitting swim trunks.
- **Personal Courtesy:**  
Please do not comment or complain about the sights and smells you experience while in Haiti. It is insulting to the Haitians to hear this. They are proud of their country. Many nationals may not be comfortable speaking English but they do understand what you are saying.
- **Time Protocol:**  
Please be on time. We want to be respectful of other travelers and ready when the van and/or other vehicles are ready to go. There will be times that we will have to wait for one reason or another but please don't keep others waiting on you. **\*\*\*Note\*\*\* If you are not ready the van will leave without you and you will be at the hotel for the day. Please be courteous to your fellow travelers.**
- **Personal Safety:**  
Please stay with the group and DO NOT go off on your own at any time. This could compromise your safety as well as the safety of the group. There are vendors outside of the hotel where you can purchase souvenirs, please stay in a group when going outside the gate of the hotel to shop.

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## Orphanage Decorum:

- **Childcare:** Please DO NOT tell the nannies or the other staff how to do their job. You will see things done differently than you would probably do in your own home. The children are well taken care of and are loved by their nannies. If you have any concerns please take those concerns privately to your group leader, FHG missions coordinator or Pierre.
- **Birth Parent Meetings:** If you are meeting birth parents, DO NOT give them any money or gifts until after your adoption is complete. This could jeopardize your adoption. You also cannot give out personal contact information such as address, phone, or email. You may give them a photo of your family.
- **Staff:** Please DO NOT give money or gifts until after your adoption is complete. This could jeopardize your adoption.
- **Office:** The office is where orphanage business is conducted. Because often times dossier processes are being discussed and are confidential, please refrain from camping out in the office and always knock before entering.
- **Lunch:** Serving teams will be assisting the Haitian staff to serve. Please defer to the staff's direction. There is an orderliness to feeding large groups of people and the staff is used to this on a daily basis. Your Haitian children should eat lunch with the other children in the orphanage. They do this everyday and know exactly what to expect.
- **Drinking Water:** Please fill your water bottle at the hotel in the morning before you leave. There is drinking water available at the orphanage should you need a refill.

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## Packing:

### Women:

Skirts, sleeveless or short sleeve tops, dresses, Capris, sandals, etc. Shorts can be worn, but must be modest in length. Swimwear that is modest. No bikinis please. Work clothes.

\*\*If you are attending any meetings in Haiti regarding your adoption, please wear shirts that cover your shoulders and skirts or pants that go below your knees.

### Men:

Khaki pants, polo shirts, sandals or comfortable shoes. Shorts are not worn by most men in Haiti, but are acceptable. Modest swim trunks. Work clothes.

### General:

- Personal Toiletries **\*\*\*Note\*\*\*** avoid fruity or flower scented shampoo. It attracts mosquitoes
- Baby Powder (helps keep you dry)
- Towels & Washclothes, beach towels
- Small travel pillow
- Antibacterial Soap
- Antibacterial Hand Sanitizer
- Small First Aid Kit
- Tylenol
- PeptoBismol
- Immodium
- Vitamins
- Sunscreen
- Mosquito Repellent
- Citronella Candles (for outdoor use)
- Sunglasses
- Nixx (for lice and scabies)
- Bible and Study/Devotional Material
- Paper, Pen, Journal
- Incidental Money (for tipping and souvenirs \$200 is recommended)
- Camera
- Film
- Personal Music Device (personal CD player or Ipod)
- Worship Music
- Batteries
- A large empty water bottle **\*\*\*SEE ORPHANAGE DECORUM\*\*\***
- Snacks **\*\*\*NOTE\*\*\*** Please bring snacks that don't melt and are nutritious for those with low blood sugar.
- Individual Tide packets – These can be purchased at Wal-Mart in the travel area of the pharmacy and are handy for hand washing laundry.
- Hot pot
- Cintronella candles
- Air freshener
- Clorox wipes
- Plastic hangers to dry clothes
- Shower rod to hang clothes in shower

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## Donations:

**\*\*\*Important Note\*\*\*** Due to security measures airlines frequently change procedures. Please check with the airlines for current luggage restrictions regarding luggage and totes the day before your scheduled departure.

If luggage is used it is advisable to pack luggage that you will not need on your return trip. Look at yard sales or Good Will for luggage. Rubbermaid tubs can be used to pack donations and secured with zip ties. Please check with the airlines for size restrictions and embargos.

### Suggested Donation Items:

- Formula – Powdered Formula ONLY  
Please DO NOT ship cans of formula. Remove formula from can and double bag in Ziplocs. Remove the label from the can and place it between the layers of the two bags. When double bagging, place the Ziploc that contains the formula with the zipped end first in the second bag.
- Diaper Pins
- Plastic Pants or outer wrap pants
- Disposable Diapers – These make great cushioning for other items if removed from bag or box.
- Wet Wipes – Please bring these in refill form and not in plastic containers.
- Onesies

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## Serving Opportunities:

For His Glory is a Christian Ministry. There will be daily devotions and prayer that travelers are required to participate in. If you have spiritual gifts that you would like to share during our mission trip, please feel free to discuss that with your trip leader.

There are many opportunities to serve our Haitian friends. Please ask at the orphanage if there is any way that you can help out. If there are no specific projects to be done spend time getting to know the staff at the orphanage.

- Wash laundry
- Wash dishes
- Play with the children
- Visit with the adults
- Pray with those in need
- Rock & hold babies
- Small construction projects

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## Excursion/Sightseeing:

**\*\*\*Note\*\*\***Trips will depend upon weather, safety, and time available.

Excursion Info:

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## General Trip Overview:

Will be provided to your trip leader

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**Websites:** These websites are provided for your information and education.

Travel Tips: [http://travel.state.gov/travel/tips/tips\\_1232.html](http://travel.state.gov/travel/tips/tips_1232.html)

Haiti Information: <https://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/ha.html>

Dictionary: <http://www.haitisurf.com/dictionary.shtml>

<http://www.angelfire.com/ky/LeCorde/krdic0.html>

**Recommended Reading:** These book suggestions are to prepare you for the culture and language of Haiti.

Creole Made Easy by Wally R. Turnbull

The Oxford Picture Dictionary by Norma Shapiro and Jayme Adelson-Goldstein

Cultures of the World Haiti by Roseline Ng Cheong-Lum & Leslie Jermyn

Culture and Customs of Haiti by J. Michael Dash

Language CD – Pimsleur Language Program, Haitian Creole

**Your church should read these books before your team leaves:**

Re-Entry Team by Neal Pirolo

Serving as Senders by Neal Pirolo

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## F.A.Q. – Frequently Asked Questions:

- What do I do if someone asks me for money?  
Please DO NOT give money or gifts. If you are approached and asked for money, tell the person that you need to talk to the trip leader and cannot commit to anything. Be firm. If you wish to donate to a specific need, this will have to be done through the orphanage only.
- Do I need to exchange my American or Canadian dollars for Haitian Currency?  
No, American dollars are recommended and welcomed in Haiti
- Is there free time with the children at the orphanage?  
Yes, there is plenty of free time to spend with the children at the orphanage. The children love to play. Please spend some time playing with as many of the children as you can. Everyone looks forward to the missionaries visit.
- What kinds of things can I bring with me to play with the children at the orphanage?  
Recommended items would be: (Please check with your trip leader for quantities)
  - Bubbles
  - Jump ropes
  - Sidewalk chalk
  - Color books
  - Crayons
  - Children's card games such as "Go Fish"
  - Candy preferably hard candy like "Lifesavers"
  - Small puzzles
  - Stickers
  - Jacks
  - Small books
  - Marbles for older children
- Who are the people I will meet at the orphanage and what do they do?  
You will meet birth parents, staff, parents wanting to abandon their children, birth parents of children already with their adoptive families and sometimes friends of staff. Occasionally you will meet various food, water and other vendors for the orphanage.
- How will I communicate with birth parents and other Haitians?  
Translators will be available. Please use a translator when speaking with Haitians so that there can be no misunderstanding in communication. If you speak French please don't speak in French to birth parents. Many of them only speak Creole and will be offended if you speak to them in French.
- Am I safe in Haiti?  
You are safe as long as you stay with the group. It is not recommended that you go off by yourself. FHG takes every precaution for your safety so please stay with the group.
- Can I eat the food from street vendors or from the market?  
It is not recommended that you eat food from street vendors unless you have been to Haiti before. The food from the market is safe as long as the package has not been opened. It is not recommended that you eat any fresh fruit or vegetables from the market. The fresh fruit and vegetables at the hotel are safe to eat.
- Is it ok for me to purchase souvenir items?  
Yes, this helps out the economy and helps provide income for vendors. It is acceptable to bargain with vendors, but please remember that the median family income is \$250 per month. There are usually vendors outside of the hotel where items can be purchased. Please remember that these people are friends of FHG and treat them with dignity and respect when bargaining. Items can also be purchased on scheduled excursions.

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## Bible Study:

Before beginning this study please pray and ask God to speak to your heart as you prepare for this trip.

### God loves children

Mark 10:13-16

What does the verse say?

What is God saying to me?

Luke 9:46-48

What does the verse say?

What is God saying to me?

Psalms 8:2

What does the verse say?

What is God saying to me?

### God has great compassion for orphans and fatherless children

Exodus 22:22

What does the verse say?

What is God saying to me?

Deut 10:17,18

What does the verse say?

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What is God saying to me?

Psalm 27:10

What does the verse say?

What is God saying to me?

Psalm 68:5

What does the verse say?

What is God saying to me?

John 14:18

What does the verse say?

What is God saying to me?

James 1:27

What does the verse say?

What is God saying to me?

**God also has compassion on the childless**

Psalm 113:9

What does the verse say?

What is God saying to me?

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Isaiah 54:1

What does the verse say?

What is God saying to me?

**We are not born into the family of God, but adopted!**

Eph. 1:4-6

What does the verse say?

What is God saying to me?

Romans 8:23

What does the verse say?

What is God saying to me?

Rev. 21:7

What does the verse say?

What is God saying to me?

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## Famous Adoptees of the Bible

This is not a comprehensive list. You are encouraged to dig deeper in the Word and study about these and other adoptees in the Bible.

Moses Exodus 2:1-10

Esther Esther 2:7

Samuel 1 Samuel 1:22-28

## Additional Note

Let God use these verses and other verses in the Bible to prepare your heart for Haiti. If this is not your first trip with FHG other suggested topical studies would be:

Trusting God  
Compassion  
God's Provision  
Faith

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## Travel Check List:

- Immunizations
- Passport and/or Visa
- Deposit Fee
- Mission Application
- Group Travel Form
- Travel Call 1
- Travel Call 2
- Embassy Registration
- Travel Insurance
- Travel Funds (Incidentals on the trip \$300 cash recommended)
- Packing
- Donations

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## Regular Physical Activity

Short-term mission trips can be stressful and physically challenging.

There are many factors that can cause fatigue, stress, weariness, tension and even depression on a short-term mission trip; extremely hot weather conditions, physically challenging work assignments, long hours, inability to speak the language, irregular sleep, unfamiliarity of the foreign country, and seeing poverty and human suffering. These factors can all lead to heightened irritability, annoyance, distress and tempers. It is very important you do your part in preparing your mind and body for these mental and physical challenges of a short-term mission trip.

For His Glory Adoption Outreach encourages it's missionaries to consider starting a fitness program prior to or when there is full commit to a short-term mission trip.

There are huge benefits that can be expected by including a healthy diet and a moderate endurance exercise program into your lifestyle.

Benefit	Source
Preventive medicine. The evidence is overwhelming: a balanced diet combined with moderate exercise is one of the best things you can do for your body. It bolsters the immune system, and lowers the risk of heart disease, cancer, high blood pressure, diabetes, obesity, and osteoporosis.	American Cancer Society American Heart Association US Surgeon General
<b>Boosts brain power.</b> Keeps brain sharp in old age and may help prevent Alzheimer's Disease	Carl Cotman, Ph.D. University of CA at Irvine
Improves mood and feelings of well-being..( <b>reducing stress</b> )	Robert Thayer, Ph.D., CA State University
Improves strength at any age.	US department of Agriculture Research Center on Aging at Tufts University
Slashes risk of heart disease. 120-160 minutes per week of aerobic activity can help control cholesterol, high blood pressure and diabetes	American Heart Association
Exercise significantly <b>reduces depression</b> and improves sleep	Journal of Gerontology
Relieves symptoms of PMS (premenstrual syndrome). Regular exercise significantly relieves premenstrual depression and anxiety	George Washington University, Washington, DC
May reduce breast cancer risk	Journal of the National Cancer Institute
Even moderate exercise works to stimulate the brain. Researchers put half of a group of sedentary people ranging in age from the mid-20s to early 60s on a walking or jogging program three times a week. After 10 weeks, the active group reported more mental alertness and vigor	Duke University study
<b>Exercise boosts memory.</b> Adults who exercise aerobically increase significant amounts of blood flow to the brain which leads to better memory	Judy Tatelbaum, CA Psychotherapist / Author
Exercise gains are extremely comprehensive, thoroughly generating both physical and mental benefits. "People who exercise regularly tend to sleep better, and use less sugar, caffeine, alcohol, nicotine, and other drugs. Above all, exercise makes you feel good about yourself. For most people, exercise is on of the most obvious self-respecting behaviors. Each time you jog, visit the gym, or play a game or squash, you are building your positive self-image – <b>a physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual foundation for your growing self-esteem.</b> "	Richard Earle, Ph.D. & David Imrie, MD,  "Your Vitality Quotient"

Endurance exercises include any activity that increase heart rate and respiratory rate. This includes walking, jogging, running, biking, swimming, rope jumping, racquetball, basketball, and many others. Over time these activities improve the health of the lungs, heart, and blood vessels. **Remember to get your health care provider's approval and recommendation for an exercise program that is right for you before beginning any form of exercise.**

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U.S. NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF MENTAL HEALTH

## Plain Talk About...Handling Stress

From the Plain Talk Series

You need stress in your life! Does that surprise you? Perhaps so, but it is quite true. Without stress, life would be dull and unexciting. Stress adds flavor, challenge, and opportunity to life. Too much stress, however, can seriously affect your physical and mental well-being. A major challenge in this stress-filled world of today is to make the stress in your life work for you instead of against you.

Stress is with us all the time. It comes from mental or emotional activity and physical activity. It is unique and personal to each of us. So personal, in fact, that what may be relaxing to one person may be stressful to another. For example, if you are an executive who likes to keep busy all the time, "taking it easy" at the beach on a beautiful day may feel extremely frustrating, nonproductive, and upsetting. You may be emotionally distressed from "doing nothing." Too much emotional stress can cause physical illness such as high blood pressure, ulcers, or even heart disease; physical stress from work or exercise is not likely to cause such ailments. The truth is that physical exercise can help you to relax and to handle your mental or emotional stress.

Hans Selye, M.D., a recognized expert in the field, has defined stress as a "non-specific response of the body to a demand." The important issue is learning how our bodies respond to these demands. When stress becomes prolonged or particularly frustrating, it can become harmful -- causing distress or "bad stress." Recognizing the early signs of distress and then doing something about them can make an important difference in the quality of your life, and may actually influence your survival.

### Reacting to Stress

To use stress in a positive way and prevent it from becoming distress, you should become aware of your own reactions to stressful events. The body responds to stress by going through three stages: (1) alarm, (2) resistance, and (3) exhaustion.

Let's take the example of a typical commuter in rush-hour traffic. If a car suddenly pulls out in front of him, his initial alarm reaction may include fear of an accident, anger at the driver who committed the action, and general frustration. His body may respond in the alarm stage by releasing hormones into the bloodstream which cause his face to flush, perspiration to form, his stomach to have a sinking feeling, and his arms and legs to tighten. The next stage is resistance, in which the body repairs damage caused by the stress. If the stress of driving continues with repeated close calls or traffic jams, however, his body will not have time to make repairs. He may become so conditioned to expect potential problems when he drives that he tightens up at the beginning of each commuting day. Eventually, he may even develop a physical problem that is related to stress, such as migraine headaches, high blood pressure, backaches, or insomnia. While it is impossible to live completely free of stress and distress, it is possible to prevent some distress as well as to minimize its impact when it can't be avoided.

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## Helping Yourself

When stress does occur, it is important to recognize and deal with it. Here are some suggestions for ways to handle stress. As you begin to understand more about how stress affects you as an individual, you will come up with your own ideas of helping to ease the tensions.

- **Try physical activity.** When you are nervous, angry, or upset, release the pressure through exercise or physical activity. Running, walking, playing tennis, or working in your garden are just some of the activities you might try. Physical exercise will relieve that "up tight" feeling, relax you, and turn the frowns into smiles. Remember, your body and your mind work together.
- **Share your stress.** It helps to talk to someone about your concerns and worries. Perhaps a friend, family member, teacher, or counselor can help you see your problem in a different light. If you feel your problem is serious, you might seek professional help from a psychologist, psychiatrist, social worker, or mental health counselor. Knowing when to ask for help may avoid more serious problems later.
- **Know your limits.** If a problem is beyond your control and cannot be changed at the moment, don't fight the situation. Learn to accept what is -- for now -- until such time when you can change it.
- **Take care of yourself.** You are special. Get enough rest and eat well. If you are irritable and tense from lack of sleep or if you are not eating correctly, you will have less ability to deal with stressful situations. If stress repeatedly keeps you from sleeping, you should ask your doctor for help.
- **Make time for fun.** Schedule time for both work and recreation. Play can be just as important to your well-being as work; you need a break from your daily routine to just relax and have fun.
- **Be a participant.** One way to keep from getting bored, sad, and lonely is to go where it's all happening. Sitting alone can make you feel frustrated. Instead of feeling sorry for yourself, get involved and become a participant. Offer your services in neighborhood or volunteer organizations. Help yourself by helping other people. Get involved in the world and the people around you, and you'll find they will be attracted to you. You will be on your way to making new friends and enjoying new activities.
- **Check off your tasks.** Trying to take care of everything at once can seem overwhelming, and, as a result, you may not accomplish anything. Instead, make a list of what tasks you have to do, then do one at a time, checking them off as they're completed. Give priority to the most important ones and do those first.
- **Must you always be right?** Do other people upset you -- particularly when they don't do things your way? Try cooperation instead of confrontation; it's better than fighting and always being "right." A little give and take on both sides will reduce the strain and make you both feel more comfortable.
- **It's OK to cry.** A good cry can be a healthy way to bring relief to your anxiety, and it might even prevent a headache or other physical consequence. Take some deep breaths; also release tension.
- **Create a quiet scene.** You can't always run away, but you can "dream the impossible dream." A quiet country scene painted mentally, or on canvas, can take you out of the turmoil of a stressful situation. Change the scene by reading a good book or playing beautiful music to create a sense of peace and tranquility.
- **Avoid self-medication.** Although you can use prescription or over-the-counter medications to relieve stress temporarily, they do not remove the conditions that caused the stress in the first place. Medications, in fact, may be habit-forming and also may reduce your efficiency, thus creating more stress than they take away. They should be taken only on the advice of your doctor.

# Haiti Travel Information

## The Art of Relaxation

The best strategy for avoiding stress is to learn how to relax. Unfortunately, many people try to relax at the same pace that they lead the rest of their lives. For a while, tune out your worries about time, productivity, and "doing right." You will find satisfaction in just being, without striving. Find activities that give you pleasure and that are good for your mental and physical well-being. Forget about always winning. Focus on relaxation, enjoyment, and health. If the stress in your life seems insurmountable, you may find it beneficial to see a mental health counselor. Be good to yourself.

*Written by Lous E. Kopolow, M.D.*

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# Haiti Travel Information

## NOTES:

### Travel Call Date & Time:

Call Information: Phone number & login will be provided by your travel leader

My Questions: Please check the FAQ before writing your question to see if it has been addressed.

### Call Notes:

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