

# CHINA HEALTH AND SAFETY AT A GLANCE

## Safety Policies

The China Center takes the health and security of students very seriously, and this is a priority in all academic activities. However due to the nature of the program, students must also take this very seriously and make responsible decisions to minimize their risk of facing a health or safety incident. The following policies are in place in order to try to minimize this risk.

### Traffic

While Hangzhou is a comparatively safe environment and there is very little violent crime compared to other cities its size, there are certain hazards that face foreign students. Traffic is one such visible hazard. According to Reuters, China has the world's highest annual death toll from traffic accidents, with nearly 100,000 fatalities in 2005, or 207 per day, making China's roads the most dangerous in the world. According to Ministry of Public Security, these numbers are the lowest since 2001, but the World Health Organization estimates China's roads cause more than 600 fatalities and 45,000 injuries every day. According to a January 11, 2006, Reuters report, "The high toll is largely a result of negligence, with drivers commonly switching lanes without looking or signaling, ignoring traffic lights, speeding down the wrong side of the road or even throwing their vehicles into reverse when they have missed a highway exit." **Therefore, we strongly advise all students to exercise extreme caution when crossing the street at busy intersections and to cross only at designated crosswalks and only when the pedestrian traffic light is green.**

### Drugs

Given the long and devastating history of opium trafficking from Great Britain to China prior to the mid-nineteenth century, it is no surprise that the Chinese government takes a strong stance against the trafficking and use of illicit drugs. Illicit narcotic and psychotropic substances are forbidden in China and may not be brought across its borders. This includes so-called "hard drugs," such as heroin and opium, and so-called "party drugs," such as cocaine, crystal methamphetamine (speed), MDMA (ecstasy), and cannabis (marijuana or hashish). In China all such narcotics are categorized in similar terms and carry a heavy sentence for cultivation, manufacturing and trafficking, including the death penalty. Non-American foreigners have been executed for drug offenses in China. We do not want any Global College Students bringing across a personal supply of recreational drugs into China to be accused of drug trafficking.

### Emergency Procedures

If a travel warning is issued, students will be evacuated from the country in due course once it is safe to do so. We encourage all students to subscribe to the U.S. Department of State Travel Warnings (DOSTRAVEL) electronic mailing list by sending an email to: [listserv@lists.state.gov](mailto:listserv@lists.state.gov) type in the message body "SUBSCRIBE DOSTRAVEL YOURNAME" (omit the quotation marks and leave subject blank). You can also use the online subscription form at: [www.state.gov/www/listservs/cms.html](http://www.state.gov/www/listservs/cms.html).

The Global College Program China Center is registered with the U.S. Department of State. Students are also required to individually register their passports with the U.S. Department of State prior to departure or immediately after arrival and to provide a copy of their passport information to the Academic Director. Students should also fill out their local address in China on

page five of the passport in pencil. If you leave the city of Hangzhou you must take the original passport with you. It is good practice to keep a copy of your passport and entry stamp with you when you travel and in a separate bag from your wallet in case your passport is lost in transit.

### **Recreational Travel**

For their own safety, students are not permitted to travel to countries with State Dept. travel advisories or to areas with high health or safety risks even if such travel is for recreational purposes and/or during semester breaks. If a student travels to one of those countries she/he will be automatically out of the Program.

### **Other**

Students should not photograph members of the People's Liberation Army (PLA), prisoners, prisons, military installations or other secure areas off-limits to civilians and foreigners. Also, it is not uncommon for some students to experience racism in China, especially against African Americans and Japanese. Finally, Chinese American students may find that some Chinese expect them to behave in ways that are more culturally Chinese and may hold Americans of Chinese descent to stricter standards than Europeans and Americans.

### **Health/Medical Information**

China's healthcare system, which resembles the country's administrative structure, is still dominated by central government. The Ministry of Public Health (MOPH) heads the system, directing the research, making policy and supervising the implementation of government policies. In addition the MOPH operates 11 medical colleges, including three teaching hospitals.

China's healthcare system has become increasingly decentralized in recent years. As the government takes a less active role in hospital administration, more Chinese hospitals are making independent purchasing decisions on medical equipment and pharmaceuticals.

It is the student's responsibility to carry valid health insurance and a valid credit card on their person at all times. In most cases, hospitals in China require payment in cash or by credit card in advance of treatment. Some large hospitals have designated VIP clinics that provide preferential treatment to patients with economic means and facilitate care for patients with special needs and limitations, including foreigners with a limited understanding of Chinese.

### **Mandatory International Health Insurance**

Students will receive their health insurance cards and a policy handbook upon their arrival to the China center. The mandatory international health insurance fee will be automatically applied to a student's tuition bill. All students will be charged for international health regardless if they are covered under a parent's policy. The fee for 2008-2009 is \$275 per semester. It is important to emphasize that except for long term hospitalization; students must pay out of pocket, and then submit a claim to the insurance company for reimbursement. The percentage covered and deductibles are outlined in the policy handbook: <https://secure.visit-aci.com/Documents/BR32201388.pdf>. In other words, it is important to bring some extra money (credit cards also work fine) to cover any medical emergency.

## Immunizations

Information on immunizations and other health-related topics are given here as a guide, not as authoritative medical advice. You should, of course, have a basic checkup and talk to your doctor before you come, and provide Admissions (for new students) or the Registrar (for continuing students) with all appropriate paperwork.

You or your physician should check with the Center for Disease Control for the most current update on the region you are traveling to. Their web page is <http://www.cdc.gov/>. If you want updated information from the U. S. State Department on the country you are traveling to, check <http://travel.state.gov/>.

When you see your doctor, tell him or her that you will be living in China for several months and visiting rural and urban areas of China. If you plan to do any traveling after the end of the semester or year, be sure to mention where you will be headed so that you can take care of that as well.

Standard travel advice applies here in China and students should drink only boiled or bottled water, avoid raw vegetables and unpeeled fruits and vegetables, as well as shellfish, to minimize risk of contagious disease.

Although yellow fever is not a disease risk in China, the government requires travelers arriving from countries where yellow fever is present to present proof of yellow fever vaccination. If you will be traveling to one of these countries where yellow fever is present before arriving in China, this requirement must be taken into consideration. To get a full list of countries affected by yellow fever, please go to: <http://www.cdc.gov/travel/yellowBookCh4-YellowFever.aspx#667>. It is recommended that you get a Hepatitis A shot (Immune Globulin). This gives your immune system a boost while your body gets used to the different food, water, etc. Hepatitis B and Typhoid shots are also recommended.

Make sure your vaccinations are updated, so you are as well protected as possible. Routine vaccines, as they are often called, include chickenpox (or varicella), polio, measles/mumps/rubella (MMR), and diphtheria/pertussis/tetanus (DPT) and are given at all stages of life. If you have any health problems, please go to your doctor and get a full treatment before arriving to the China Center. Moreover, students should make the Center Coordinator aware of any persistent health issues prior to arrival. We want to accommodate you and make your stay in China as safe as possible. It is also a good idea to get the "flu shot." All inoculations and immunizations should be recorded in the yellow booklet called "International Certificates of Vaccination."

It is recommended that you have a tuberculin skin test while still in the United States. Assuming this test is negative; it should be repeated on your return to the States. If you are a woman and you are on the Pill, you should bring enough to last through the semester or year. Condoms are easily available.

Malaria does exist in China. Malaria risk areas in China include rural areas only of the following provinces: Hainan, Yunnan, Fujian, Guangdong, Guangxi, Guizhou, Sichuan, Tibet (in the Zangbo River valley only), Anhui, Hubei, Hunan, Jiangsu, Jiangxi, and Shandong. In provinces with risk, transmission exists in rural communities below 1,500 m only during warm weather: north of latitude 33°N, July-November; between latitude 25°N and 33°N, May-December. South of latitude 25°N, transmission occurs year-round. If you should decide that you do want to take

anti-malarial drugs, talk to your physician about it. You should purchase your anti-malarial drugs before travel. Drugs purchased overseas may not be manufactured according to United States standards and may not be effective. They also may be dangerous, contain counterfeit medications or contaminants, or be combinations of drugs that are not safe to use.

### **AIDS Awareness**

AIDS is an issue in China. There is no such thing as a high-risk group – there is only high risk behavior. Using a condom protects against HIV and other sexually transmitted diseases, but is never a guarantee. Please take the necessary precautions to avoid becoming infected with this or any STD.

### **Help Available in the United States**

The Citizens Emergency Center in the State Department's Bureau of Consular Affairs provides emergency services relating to the welfare of Americans arrested or detained abroad, searches for Americans missing overseas, transmission of emergency messages for Americans to their next of kin and transfer of private funds to US posts abroad for delivery to destitute Americans. Assistance at the Citizens Emergency Center is available Monday through Friday from 8:15 am to 10:00 pm at (202)-647-9019.

For Overseas American Citizen Services in the United States call (202)-647-7899. If calling from overseas dial (888) 407-4747 or on a regular toll line dial (317) 472-2328.