

Accidents Abroad

practical advice for the traveller



Dr Katie Geary


13 Sept 2014 Joint RCN/Travel Health Training Ltd Travel Health Conference


Worldwide reach Human touch

What do I mean by Accidents?


- ⇒ Top 2 causes of Fatalities
- ⇒ Road Traffic Incidents
- ⇒ Swimming / water
- ⇒ (Personal safety)

- ⇒ Exclude:
- ⇒ Bite Avoidance
- ⇒ Vaccinations
- ⇒ Personal medical conditions: CVS
- ⇒ STI
- ⇒ Violence/ war
- ⇒ Earthquakes/Tsunami



Worldwide reach Human touch

The Size of the problem:


- ⇒ Injuries are the leading cause of death in the world.
- ⇒ Injuries are the leading cause of preventable death in travellers.
 - 5 - 29 yrs injuries = 7/15 leading causes of death (47%)
 - USA deaths abroad: injuries 23% v infections 2%
 - WHO estimates worldwide 1.2 million deaths, 20-50 million injuries per year through RTA's
 - Of the estimated 1.2 million road traffic fatalities each year, about 65% involve pedestrians
 - Countries in South East Asia account for > 1/3 of all road traffic injuries
 - Africa has the highest death rate of 28 deaths/100,000.


Worldwide reach Human touch

2011-2020: Decade for Action?





- ⇒ March 2010
64th General assembly of the United Nations described the global road safety crisis as a 'major public health problem'
- ⇒ April 2010
United Nations General Assembly declared 2011-2020 The Decade for Action for Road Safety.


Worldwide reach Human touch

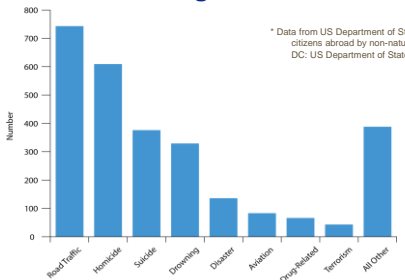
Accidents?

- ✓ Unexpected by the tourist injured
- ✓ Causes and Consequences known
- Design effective risk management and injury prevention programmes
- Including pre-travel advice.




Worldwide reach Human touch

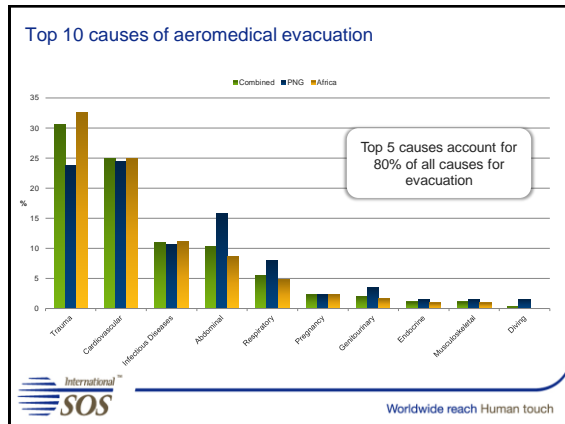
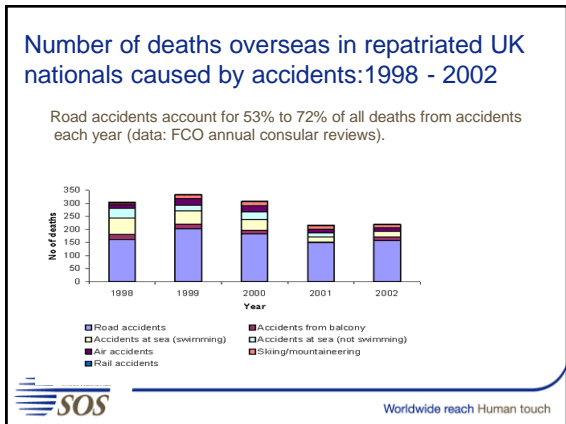
Leading causes of injury death for US citizens in foreign countries: 2009–2011*



* Data from US Department of State. Death of US citizens abroad by non-natural causes. Washington, DC: US Department of State, 2012.

Cause	Number
Road Traffic	~750
Homicide	~600
Substance	~380
Drowning	~320
Disaster	~150
Aviation	~100
Drug-Related	~80
Terrorism	~50
All Other	~400


Worldwide reach Human touch



RTA: Why does this happen? Local factors

- Other side of road
- Unsafe roads
- poor road surfaces, without hard shoulders, unprotected curves and cliff drops!
- lack of adequate street lighting and poor visibility
- inadequate transportation infrastructure: no pavements
- Mixing of all traffic types
- poorly made or lack of maintained vehicles
- Limited driver training

International SOS Worldwide reach Human touch



RTA: Traveller Factors

- Traveller fatigue:
 - » 'fitting lots in'
 - » Jet lag
- lack of road familiarity
- driving on the 'wrong' side of the road.
- Lack of Seat belt/ helmet use
- Alcohol, medication
- Budget travel
- Relaxed attitude and disregard for usual rules

International SOS Worldwide reach Human touch

Water and Aquatic Injuries

- Drowning accounts for 2% all US deaths abroad
- Unfamiliarity with local currents/ water conditions
- Rip tides
- Inability to swim
- Absence of lifeguards
- Diving into too shallow water
- Alcohol
- Scuba Diving: 15-20/100,000
- Boating

International SOS Worldwide reach Human touch

After the Accident?

Medical Care poor in Low Middle Income Countries
Survival after trauma is greatly reduced.
Lack of Ambulances.....

International SOS
Worldwide reach Human touch

Lack of Trauma Centres...

DR. JUMA CAN TREAT, SOLVE MANY PROBLEMS SUCH AS:

- MALARIA
- DIABETES
- PREGNANCY PROBLEMS
- VOMITING ALL THE TIME
- MISFORTUNES
- DEMANDS
- COURT CASES
- CASINO SPECIALIST
- BAD LUCK
- CUSTOMER ATTRACTION
- ETC.....

International SOS
Worldwide reach Human touch

Other Centres....

International SOS
Worldwide reach Human touch

The Day before travel....aaargh....

- ⇒ Too late for most vaccinations!
- ⇒ Too late for most visa applications!
- ⇒ Never too late for injury prevention advice
- ⇒ Potentially the best time!

International SOS
Worldwide reach Human touch

Does Advice make any difference?

- ⇒ Up to 65 % of travellers seek pre-travel advice at their general practitioner
- ⇒ Less than half of the advice sessions included talking about the risk of accidents.
- ⇒ Pre travel advice - A study among Swiss general practitioners. *Therapeutische Umschau*. 70 (6) (pp 313-317), 2013
- ⇒ Data on 10,499 travelers and 4,854 expatriates seen at the Canadian International Water and Energy Consultants (CIWEC) clinic in Kathmandu were prospectively collected and entered into the GeoSentinel Surveillance Network database
- ⇒ Findings: Injured travelers were less likely than others to have obtained pre-travel advice (p= 0.003)
- ⇒ Boggild AK et al. *Environmental hazards in Nepal: altitude illness, environmental exposures, injuries, and bites in travelers and expatriates. Journal of Travel Medicine*. 14(6):361-8, 2007 Nov-Dec

International SOS
Worldwide reach Human touch

Road Traffic Incidents: Advice

Access to high quality medical assistance and care while abroad can be patchy. Full travel Health Insurance that covers repatriation essential.

Check the Association for Safe International Road Travel website www.asirt.org


- Be mindful of jetlag, medications, alcohol at destination.
- Familiarise yourself with local road rules and traffic signs.
- Always use a seat belt/childseat; if necessary take one with you
- Ensure rental vehicle safe to drive – tyres, breaks, lights, seatbelts
- Drive during daylight hours
- Don't learn to ride a moped/motorbike on holiday and always Wear a helmet
- Don't drink and drive or be driven by someone who has
- Don't use mobile phone when driving

International SOS
Worldwide reach Human touch

Road Traffic Incidents: Advice

Pedestrians/taxi's

Population based studies of road traffic crashes in resorts suggest that risk is fivefold greater for tourists than for locals. (Crete and Bermuda)



Be alert when crossing roads and know the direction of traffic

Drink in moderation

Don't walk alone, at night, keep to well lit areas

If accosted, give up valuables. Go straight to Consulate


Use registered taxi's – check with hotel/travel agent

Sit in the back and wear a seat belt

Don't be driven by someone who has been drinking


Don't use overcrowded public transport/ Hitchhike

Check the Association for Safe International Road Travel website www.asirt.org



Worldwide reach Human touch

Beach Safety Australia



Swimming and surfing can be dangerous. Ensure that you are aware of the basics of beach safety.

- Only enter the water at patrolled beaches and Obey all warning signs.
- NEVER swim or surf alone
- SWIM between the red and yellow flags – these indicate the safe swim area which is monitored by the lifeguards
- LEARN what to do in a "rip" (strong current flowing seaward)
 - Stay calm
 - float on your back.,
 - raise your arm in the air and wave it from side to side.
- This attracts the attention of the lifeguards

Fact... "284 Australians drowned in 2011, with more than eight out of ten victims male".


2012 National Drowning Report



Worldwide reach Human touch

Swimming: Advice

In 2009-2011, Drowning accounted for 12% of all deaths of US citizen abroad



Check Depth of Pool

Don't dive where it is too shallow, less than 1.5m

Don't drink and Dive..

Don't dive from balcony's


Don't eat and then swim.

If hiring understand the workings of the boat/ jetski

Wear Lifejackets when boating

Supervise children at all times around water.


Spinal injuries are a frequent cause of injuries in tourists jumping into shallow water



Worldwide reach Human touch

Advice to give: Unintentional Injuries

Consideration	Behaviour	
Evacuation Insurance	Low and Middle Income destinations Adventure activities	Injuries likely to exceed local capability and capacity
Fire related injuries	Hotel floor.	Sixth Floor extent of fire ladders Seventh floor highest level of safety for jumping.
Public Transport	Use marked taxis Use Seat belts Ride in the rear seat. Avoid overweight, top-heavy buses Use well maintained vehicles.	Where possible don't use taxis without seat belts. Recommendations from travel agents/hotel. Beware pickpockets



Worldwide reach Human touch



Wish I was here....
Thank you for listening....



Worldwide reach Human touch

Finally.....



Questions?



Worldwide reach Human touch

Educational resources

- ≡ National Travel Health Network and Centre (www.nathnac.org)—Country specific guidelines for healthcare professionals on vaccination
- ≡ Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/destinations/list.htm)—Health and safety advice for the preparing traveller
- ≡ Fit for Travel (www.fitfortravel.nhs.uk/advice.aspx)—Health information for people travelling abroad from the UK, including advice for on volunteer work
- ≡ Year Out Group (www.yearoutgroup.org/)—An association of independent registered organisations that provide structured programmes for young travellers planning volunteer work, expeditions, or cultural exchanges



Worldwide reach Human touch