



SPRING BREAK

HAVE FUN BUT STAY SAFE!

Adapted from tips from the Centers for Disease Control

Make this year's spring break memorable by having fun and helping yourself, your friends, and others stay safe and healthy.

Before You Go

Know what's happening en route or at your travel destination. Check the [US Department of State websiteExternal](#) for information on security risks. Register with the [Smart Traveler Enrollment ProgramExternal](#) so the US embassy or consulate can contact you in case of an emergency.

Protect Your Health

Are [vaccinations](#) required? Are there special food, destination, or other things you need to consider ahead of time? If you are taking medications, do you have enough for the trip? Plan a visit with your doctor or a [travel medicine specialist](#) at least 1 month before you leave the United States.

Find out if your health insurance covers medical care abroad—many plans don't! Consider [additional insurance](#) that covers health care and emergency evacuation, especially if you will be traveling to remote areas.

[Pack smart](#) and prepare a travel health kit with the items you may need on your trip, including prescription and over-the-counter medicines, [insect repellent](#), [sunscreen](#), alcohol-based hand sanitizer, and condoms.

Watch your step

There may be temptations on your break that involve different or high-risk activity. Think twice before putting yourself at risk for [injury](#). Be sure to use appropriate safety gear before venturing out, such as seat belts, life vests, or knee pads. Remember that unintentional injuries kill more Americans in their first three decades of life than any other cause of death. In fact, injuries (both unintentional and those caused by acts of violence) are among the top ten killers for Americans of all ages.

[Water-related injuries](#) can be a special risk on Spring Break Trips. When swimming and boating, know what's expected and what you can do to prevent injury or death for yourself and others. Know how to swim. Wear your life jacket while boating. Avoid alcoholic beverages while boating. Complete a boating education course. Participate in the vessel safety check program.

HEALTHY SPRING BREAK TIPS

Limit alcohol

If [drinking alcohol](#) is part of your break, remember that it can impair your judgment and actions. Alcohol-related motor vehicle crashes kill someone every 31 minutes and nonfatally injure someone every two minutes. [Don't drink and drive](#). There are plenty of non-alcoholic alternatives.

Protect yourself

Love is all around, and so are sexually transmitted diseases. The only 100% sure way to prevent [sexually transmitted diseases](#) and unintended pregnancy is by not having sex. If you choose to have sex, using latex condoms and having a monogamous, uninfected partner may help lower your risk. Women are more likely to be victims of sexual violence than men. Women who experience both sexual and physical abuse are significantly more likely to have sexually transmitted diseases. Take precautions and avoid situations or persons that may place you at [risk for harm](#).

Protect yourself from the sun

After a cold winter, it's tempting to stay in the hot sun all day. Although getting a little sun can have some benefits, excessive and unprotected sun exposure can result in premature aging, changes in skin texture, and skin cancer. Always wear [sunscreen](#) with at least SPF 15. For eye protection, wear wraparound sunglasses that provide 100 percent UV ray protection.

Remember that you are not immortal. Students are notorious for believing that nothing bad will happen to them, and they will try anything at least once. Don't throw caution to the winds but instead exercise extreme care not to place yourself in physically dangerous situations you would not dare to undergo at home. In a report on Spring Break from Saint Joseph's University in Philadelphia, sociologist Dr. Raquel Kennedy Bergen said, "Unfamiliar locations increase vulnerability. Psychologically, people may be more inclined to try new behaviors and step outside their 'comfort zone' when away from home."



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