

GLOBAL HEALTH CARE
RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SELF-MANAGEMENT

1. Medical Tourism has become a popular term, but a more accurate and appropriate title is Global Health Care. The very word tourism reflects a holiday. Those seeking health care abroad are not tourists, but rather, patients seeking treatment for their illnesses that are not available in the United States.
2. The existence of a web site, however polished and impressive, does not reflect the development of an effective or appropriate procedure. Do not mistake the qualifications of the marketer for the hopeful qualifications of the clinician.
3. The best credentials are:
 - a. Evidence of a well-constructed and implemented clinical test study
 - b. Determination that the institution offering the procedure is internationally credentialed
 - c. Documentation of the results of the procedure in the specific category of illness for which you are seeking treatment
4. The words "Stem Cell Therapy" are parallel to the word "Medication." The meaning of the words is overly broad and subject to gross generalization. A determination of true efficacy should be based upon:
 - a. An analysis of the specifics as related to the disease or condition in question
 - b. Whether the procedure is:
 - i. Autologous
 - ii. Allogenic
 - iii. Human Umbilical Cord Blood
 - iv. Epithelial Skin Cell Derived
 - v. Hematopoietic Derived
 - vi. Embryonic Stem Cells
 - vii. Fetal Cells
 - viii. How delivered (brain, spinal cord, injected, other)
5. Anticipated results from the procedure should be clearly defined prior to treatment so that appropriate expectations can be measured.
6. Full disclosure and documentation should be made available prior to making a decision to proceed.
 - a. Clinical Test Study Overview
 - b. Who are the physicians? What is their background and training?
 - c. Description of the procedure
 - d. Safety of the procedure
 - e. Justification for the procedure for a particular illness
 - f. Duration of hospitalization – Description and standards of hospital
 - g. Research Funding
 - h. Complete cost to the patient for the procedure
 - i. Travel and hotel information
 - j. Tests required pre-procedure
 - k. Anticipated results from the procedure
 - l. Follow-up procedures required
 - m. Scheduling and acceptance requirements
7. Use your instincts
 - a. Is the facility a public or private organization?
 - b. Are they associated with esteemed institutions?
 - c. Do they have verifiable government support in their country?
 - d. Do they appear financially and operationally stable?
 - e. Are their claims reasonable and believable?
 - f. Can you verify what they say?