

Chapter 3: Planning and Preparing for Medical Tourism

Post Operative Care

Planning the post-operative care is as important as pre-surgical preparations for ensuring the complete success of the medical tour. It is vital to arrange for the post-operative period, especially when you will be returning home, so that you don't end up feeling crushed.

You can easily manage the post-operative phase just as your medical procedure, if you can organize the things and speed through the millions of questions that come in your mind and your family/relatives are willing to know.

Patients need to be cautious about taking a long flight back home after surgery, as it might augment the risks of complications. Consult your doctor before returning and it is advisable that you have a companion with you while traveling.

Post Operative Recovery

An ample amount of time is required to recuperate from the surgery and you should avoid taking any kind of stress amounting from work, emails, bills or anything else. Remember that at this period, the only thing that should matter the most is your recovery and health. Moreover, do not hesitate to seek help from your family or friends, as they will be more than happy to accompany you in your recovery process.

Many hospitals include 8-10 day stay at their facility in the medical tourism package itself, keeping in mind the recuperation period required before returning home. Moreover, some also provide post-operative support for a month or more and maintain your case file and medical history, so that you can coordinate with them and take your family doctor the loop even after you return home. Therefore, selecting a similar medical tourism facility provider will be a good idea.

- Connecting back with local doctor:

Your family doctor will play a crucial role in ensuring that you get effective and good post-operative care so that you can recuperate quickly. Therefore, it is essential that you discuss all the details with your local doctor before embarking on with your medical tour, so that he is completely aware of the medical plan of action that is to be employed upon your return.

Moreover, it is necessary to divulge all the information and recommendations provided by the doctor who is treating you, so that your local doctor is aware of your medical condition completely. It is important to show all related medical documents like X-rays, discharge papers, prescriptions etc, to your local doctor. If possible, organize a chat between your family doctor and your treating doctor, through phone or online, so that your medical conditions are more clear and you will have the backing of another reliable doctor in case any complications arise later on.

- Digitalizing medical documents:

Digitalizing medical documents is a great way to preserve and carry all the medical documents in a secure and convenient manner. By digitizing medical information, patients can be in charge of their own medical records and can easily carry them in a portable form, worldwide. Digitizing medical records and taking ownership of them is pertinent as more and more people travel globally nowadays. As, portable and dependable storage devices such as USB drives are widely accepted all over, one can easily produce or refer to the relevant information anytime require . Portable electronic medical records not only help in augmenting the quality of health care, but it is also instrumental in reducing the cost. With digitized medical documents are extremely beneficial during post-operative recovery phase as patients can easily update their treating doctor and their local doctor regarding their progress.

- Communicating with treating doctor:

Remaining in constant touch with the treating doctor is a vital component in ensuring quick and easy recovery after the surgery. You need to consult your doctor about the precautions and any symptoms or complications that you need to be wary about. Do discuss with him whether it is safe for you to travel, before planning to fly back home.

Using technology (tele-medicine)

Telemedicine is a high-tech solution for bridging the gap between the care receivers and providers, irrespective of their physical location. It is a mode of providing remote health services with the help of telecommunications and computer science.

It makes the physical distances seem very irrelevant and even cuts down on travel. Covering almost every level of healthcare, telemedicine provides easy access to health care right from the emergency medical treatments to medical speciality consultations and surgical procedures.

Considered to be an indispensable cog in the wheel of medical tourism, telemedicine makes it easy for the patient and the care providers to “know each other”, before they actually get to meet each other for the first time.

The remote and locale health care providers can exchange health-related notes on an on-demand basis during the clinical care process, right from the initial stage of treatment to follow-up sessions, continuing until the release of the patient.

Subsequently, the concept of telemedicine enhances the overall efficiency, productivity and appeal of medical treatment, especially medical tourism. With the revolutionizing development in technology, the patients, care providers, family and friends have access to the correct clinical information available easily at the correct time on-demand basis, during and after the treatment process.

- What to do if complications develop:

The success rate of medical tourism can be easily judged by the fact that the majority of medical tourists are particularly satisfied with their experience and even encourage other people to take advantage of this qualitative and economical alternative.

However, one needs to understand that akin to any medical procedure, medical tour also involves certain element of risk. Therefore, it is extremely important for a potential medical tourist to contemplate the probability of complications.

Probably, your treating doctor or overseas medical team might have informed you about all the possible risks involved in surgery, and must have explained the symptoms to look out for that will help you in identifying potential complications.

Although, complications does not imply that they are life threatening, but it is important for you to be wary of them so that they get medical attention. Some of the common complications that are likely to occur are infection, abnormal and continuous bleeding around a cut, high fever, migraines/headaches or shortness of breath. If you experience and of these or other symptoms, then it is advisable that you consult your treating doctor immediately, and follow his advice.

- How relatives/friends can help to a smoother recover:

It is crucial for patients to keep reminding themselves, repeatedly, that their sole concern is recuperating from the treatment. This is more important for patients who have undergone surgery or other major medical procedures, which requires ample time to rest and relax so that their bodies can heal. During this period, you should not exert or stress yourself and try to relax. Patient should follow a healthy diet or indulge in exercise, as recommended by the treating doctor.

Your family, friends, relatives and even co-workers can prove to be of great help during your recovery phase. Seek their help without having a guilt feeling or being egoistic and hesitant for any reason. After all, they are your near and dear ones and will be more than willing to help you out to recover in this crucial phase. Think about it, you would do it for them—right?