



Faith In Practice

Life Changing Medical Mission

Illness During Missions Protocol (IDMP)

May 2023

The mission of Faith In Practice is to improve the physical, spiritual, and economic conditions of the poor in Guatemala through short-term surgical, medical, and dental mission trips in addition long term relationships with local volunteers and partner hospitals and clinics. Our mission is based on an ecumenical understanding that as people of God we are called to demonstrate the love and compassion that is an outward sign of God's presence among us. Faith In Practice's life-changing medical mission is to minister to the poor, while providing a spiritually enriching experience for our volunteers.

Purpose and Scope

While treating illnesses is part of the work we do in Guatemala, there may be instances when Faith In Practice staff, US volunteers, and Guatemalan Volunteers fall ill during a medical mission. The purpose of the Illness During Mission Protocol (IDMP) document is to outline expectations and steps to be taken when a communicable illness may be present among the FIP staff, US volunteers, or Guatemalan volunteers during a medical mission. An illness referenced herein includes, but is not limited to, any communicable disease such as gastric illness, respiratory illness including the flu and COVID-19, conjunctivitis, skin infections, and throat infections.

Faith In Practice will utilize guidelines provided by the United States Center for Disease Control (CDC) for communicable diseases which can be reviewed by visiting www.cdc.gov. Faith In Practice will also utilize the guidance provided by the Guatemalan US Embassy, <https://gt.usembassy.gov>, and the Ministerio de Salud Pública y Asistencia Social (MSPAS) at <https://www.mspas.gob.gt>. In addition, there may be hospital or clinic-based protocols that we will be required to follow. Communicable illness symptoms include, but are not limited to, fever, chills and sweats, change in cough or a new cough, sore throat or new mouth sore, shortness of breath, nasal congestion, stiff neck, runny nose, itchy eyes, eye discharge, red and/or itchy skin, diarrhea, vomiting, and stomach or abdominal pain.

Key Takeaways:

1. All participants have a personal responsibility to ensure they are healthy before and during the Mission trip. If you feel ill or unwell in any way during the Mission, contact the Team Doctor for an evaluation.
2. All participants have a responsibility to take care of one another. If you see someone who is ill or struggling, ask the individual if they've seen the Team Doctor or ask the Team Doctor to check on them.
3. The Team Doctor is responsible for implementing the appropriate illness treatment protocol. The Team Doctor will hold all patient information confidential. The Team Doctor will not disclose patient information to team or staff members unless special circumstances warrant doing so.

Pre-Mission Expectations

All Mission participants have a responsibility to ensure they are healthy before they begin their Mission week. If a communicable illness spreads throughout the team and your team is unable to work, the Mission may not be successful as patient encounters will be cancelled. As a result, we expect that all FIP staff and volunteers will take responsibility for their health and the overall health of their team.

Faith In Practice Staff Expectations

1. If you have any communicable illness symptoms one or two days before a Mission begins, notify your supervisor, and seek guidance on any additional testing that may need to occur.
2. If you test positive for a communicable disease, you will not be able to participate in the Mission unless you are past the contagious period of the illness. Your doctor should be able to provide you with guidance on the contagious period of your illness.

US Volunteer Expectations

1. If you test positive for a communicable disease, you will not be able to participate in the Mission unless you are past the contagious period of the identified illness. Your doctor should be able to provide you with guidance on the contagious period of your illness.
2. Faith In Practice reserved the right to refuse participation on a medical mission at any time.

Guatemalan Volunteer Expectations

1. If you have any communicable illness symptoms one or two days before a Mission begins, notify the volunteer leader and seek guidance on any additional testing that may need to occur.
2. If you test positive for a communicable disease, you will not be able to participate in the Mission unless you are past the contagious period of the illness. Your doctor should be able to provide you with guidance on the contagious period of your illness.

During Mission Expectations

During the Mission, there are opportunities for us to engage in illness monitoring activities to help with early identification and proactive treatment measures. Masking continues to be required in all clinical spaces. Faith In Practice also strongly encourages you to wear a face mask in any area, including those outside of the clinic setting, such as the hotel or when walking around Antigua, where there is a high risk of exposure to illness. .

1. Before every morning devotional, the Team Doctor should lead a 1-minute body scan focused on identifying possible illness symptoms. The Team Doctor may designate the Team Leader to lead the body scan if needed.

To conduct the body scan, you may use the following scan or one of your choosing:

- a) (Ask the team to close their eyes and open their ears to the sound of your voice)
- b) Take a deep breath and release.
(Wait 5 seconds)

Faith In Practice, Illness During Mission Protocol (IDMP)

- c) Focusing on your head and neck, do you feel any aches, dizziness, itchy eyes, stuffiness, or a runny nose? Are you losing your voice? Is your throat sore?
(Wait 5 seconds)
 - d) Focusing on your chest, can you breathe freely? Do you need to cough? Do you feel a burning or constricted sensation when you breathe?
(Wait 5 seconds)
 - e) Focusing on your belly and lower abdomen, does your stomach feel upset? Have you had any abnormal gastrointestinal issues?
(Wait 5 seconds)
 - f) Focusing on your arms and lower limbs, are your shoulders, wrists, and hands sore? Are your hips, knees, ankles, and feet sore and in need of attention?
(Wait 5 seconds)
 - g) Focusing on your entire body, do you feel feverish or have chills? Is your body achy, itchy, or feeling unusually off?
(Wait 5 seconds)
 - h) Take one last relaxing deep breath and release.
(Wait 5 seconds)
 - i) Open your eyes. If you noticed any unusual aches, pains, or symptoms during this body scan, please see your Team Doctor immediately for assessment and testing if needed.
2. Faith In Practice highly encourages each volunteer and staff member to also conduct a personal body scan in the evening to identify possible illness symptoms. The Team Doctor is available to provide consultations when in doubt and should be notified if any illness symptoms are detected. If necessary, the Team Doctor may require additional testing at a laboratory capable of providing testing that Faith In Practice is not able to conduct.
3. If a team member has a communicable illness during the Mission, the following steps will be taken:
- a) Team Doctor assesses the team member and issues protocol to be followed.
 - b) Team Doctor prescribes medications (if applicable) for treatment.
 - c) Team Doctor determines if isolation will be needed in accordance with current guidelines.
 - d) Team Doctor determines if additional volunteers need to be notified of exposure. If yes, Team Doctor works with Team Leader and FIP Staff Leader to determine the best method for and scope of notification.
 - e) Team Doctor works with Team Leader and FIP Staff Leader to determine if the team member's roommate(s) needs to be tested or relocated to a different hotel room.
 - f) Team Doctor will monitor team member's progress. Team Doctor will notify Team Leader of progress as appropriate. If the team member's condition deteriorates, Team Doctor will work

with FIP Staff Leader to transfer the team member to a hospital in Guatemala City for a higher level of care.

4. If alternative steps need to be taken for unforeseeable reasons in either scenario, the Team Doctor (or the Team Leader in their absence) will assess the situation and alert the Faith In Practice Staff Leader immediately.
5. The Team Doctor, or designee, will record illness symptoms and surveillance measures during the mission and forward them to the FIP Quality Committee for review by emailing teams@faithinpractice.org

Post-Mission Expectations

Since there is an incubation period for many communicable illnesses, it is possible that a person may not experience symptoms until after their Mission week has concluded. In the event that a communicable illness is identified following a Mission, the below steps are recommended:

- a. Email teams@faithinpractice.org with information about your mission (Team Number, Team Leader, Location, etc.) and the date that you received a positive test.
- b. A member of the Faith In Practice Team will reach out to gather information and discuss next steps.
- c. The Faith In Practice Quality Committee Chair, or someone designated by them, will determine if additional members of the Mission team need to be notified and they will determine the best method of notification.