



EA+® Update

Exclusively for Members of the
AOPA-Endorsed Emergency
Assistance Plus program



June 2014

Are the 'What ifs'...Worth It?

Dear <Name>,

There's a certain excitement when you're getting ready set out on a new travel adventure. There's the anticipation of seeing new places or reconnecting with family or friends. There's that nagging thought that you may have forgotten to pack something important. Then there are the "what ifs":

- What if I get sick?
- What if I have an accident?
- What will I do if my chronic condition unexpectedly flares up?

EA+ can't help you with your packing, but when you remember to pack your EA+ card before you leave home, we will be able to ease your mind from most worries about the "what ifs."

This issue of EA+ Update® shows how your EA+ I.D. card delivers travel peace-of-mind. We're always just a phone call away whenever you need a reassuring voice and a helping hand.

Chelsea Waiton, Publisher

P.S. **Write us a letter or an email and share your story.** We'd love to hear from you about your EA+ experience, your travel tips or insider advice. Contact us through our Emergency Assistance Plus Facebook page or drop us a line at Chelsea@emergencyassistanceplus.com.

EA+ CASE STUDY

Our Irish Adventure



One week into our tour of Ireland, my husband, Patrick, began losing the use of the right side of his body. We expressed concern to our tour guide, who arranged for the chartered bus driver to take us to the nearest emergency room.

While Patrick was being wheeled away for tests, the guide expressed his regrets that he couldn't delay the tour to wait for us. After spending a few minutes giving me information on how to re-connect with the tour if circumstance allowed, he and the bus were gone.

Now I found myself in a hospital waiting area—seemingly halfway around the world—and my husband was who-knows-where getting tested for a possible stroke. At that moment, I had never felt so alone.

But then things went from bad to worse.

A physician rushed into the waiting area and quickly explained that the symptoms weren't from a stroke. Rather, they were caused by a subdural hematoma—bleeding on his brain.

Patrick needed emergency surgery.

Suddenly, so many questions began racing through my mind: Is he getting the right care?... How long would we be here?... Where would I stay?... When could we head back to the U.S.?... How would we get back home?

It was at that moment I made the decision to call EA+. I wanted to know my options, no matter what happened.

Words cannot describe the relief I felt when I spoke with the EA+ Assistance Coordinator. She was friendly, reassuring and—most of all—calm. She alleviated my growing panic and despair by explaining that we had lots of options. Plus, she would be there to answer my questions and help me along every step of the way.

I'm happy to report that Patrick came through surgery like a champ. After six days he was released from the hospital. Two days after leaving the hospital, he went back to have his staples removed and a final, quick check-up. With that, we were approved to head for home the next day.

EA+ paid for our trip home. We were soon on our way and the relief I felt was unbelievable.

So, thank you, EA+. Thank you for being there every step of the way. Thank you for keeping me informed about what would happen next and for taking care of all of the details.

And thank you for getting Patrick and me safely home.

Sincerely,
Marilyn M.
Thousand Oaks, CA

This case is based on a real event. The names of the individuals and certain details have been changed to protect individual privacy.

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DID YOU KNOW

Be Prepared for Illness Before and During Travel

- Check your health insurance plan to see if—or what—it will cover abroad.
- Think about purchasing additional health insurance for your trip if needed
- **Take your EA+ Card with you.** This could cover the cost of transporting you to other parts of a country or outside the country if you are hospitalized and the current facility cannot give you the care you need.
- Be prepared to pay out of pocket at the time you receive any medical services while traveling, even if you have insurance.

How do you know if you're sick?

It is not always obvious, so it is a good idea to know beforehand the signs and symptoms of illness. This will prepare you to recognize these symptoms so that you can take action quickly while on your trip.

The Centers for Disease Control defines an ill traveler as a person who has one or more of the following symptoms:

- Appearing obviously sick (e.g., severe headache, weakness, skin or eyes turning yellow)
- Fever of 100° F (38° C) or greater
- Skin rash
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Severe cough that does not go away
- Confusion, especially if it has just started
- Bruising or bleeding (without previous injury)
- Diarrhea that does not go away
- Vomiting that does not go away (other than motion sickness)

IMPORTANT: If you have any of these symptoms while you are still at home, you should talk with your doctor before traveling.

Beware the Burn!

Sunburn is an often painful sign of skin damage from spending too much time outdoors without wearing protective sunscreen. Years of overexposure to the sun lead to premature wrinkling, aging of the skin, age spots, and an increased risk of skin cancer.

In addition to the skin, eyes can get burned from sun exposure. Sunburned eyes become red, dry, and painful, and feel gritty.

Chronic exposure of eyes to sunlight may cause pterygium (tissue growth that leads to blindness), cataracts, and macular degeneration, a leading cause of blindness.

Symptoms

Unlike a thermal burn, sunburn is not immediately apparent. Symptoms usually start about 4 hours after sun exposure, worsen in 24-36 hours, and resolve in 3-5 days.

Symptoms may include:

- Red, warm, and tender skin
- Swollen skin
- Blistering
- Headache
- Fever
- Nausea
- Fatigue

The pain from sunburn is worse 6-48 hours after sun exposure. Skin peeling usually begins 3-8 days after exposure.

First Aid

There is no quick cure for minor sunburn:

- Symptoms can be treated with aspirin, acetaminophen, or ibuprofen to relieve pain and headache and reduce fever.
- Drinking plenty of water helps to replace fluid losses.
- Cool baths or the gentle application of a cool wet cloth on the burned area may also provide some comfort.
- Avoid further exposure until the burn has resolved.
- Additional symptomatic relief may be achieved through the application of a topical moisturizing cream, aloe, or 1% hydrocortisone cream.
- A low-dose (0.5%-1%) hydrocortisone cream, which is sold over the counter, may be helpful in reducing the burning sensation and swelling and speeding up healing.

If blistering occurs:

- Lightly bandage or cover the area with gauze to prevent infection.
- The blisters should not be broken, as this will slow the healing process and increase the risk of infection.
- When the blisters break and the skin peels, dried fragments may be removed and an antiseptic ointment or hydrocortisone cream may be applied.

Seek medical attention if any of the following occur:

- Severe sunburns covering more than 15% of the body
- Dehydration
- High fever (above 101°F)
- Extreme pain that persists for longer than 48 hours

To ensure receipt of these communications, please add our "From" address chelsea@emergencyassistanceplus.com to your address book.

For all written correspondence, please contact us at:
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1155 Eugenia Place, Carpinteria, CA 93013-2062

Emergency Assistance Plus has sent you this email newsletter as an enrolled EA+ member. If you no longer wish to receive this e-newsletter, simply click on the following link: [Unsubscribe](#)

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Please email it, along with your contact information, to Chelsea@emergencyassistanceplus.com. We'd love to hear from you.

Members Ask: EA+ FAQs

Q. Is EA+ a first responder?

When should I call you in an emergency?

A. In an emergency, **ALWAYS call 911**, or go directly to the nearest hospital immediately. EA+ is NOT a first responder. Call us once you have received first responder care.

Q. If I am on the side of the road and have a medical emergency, do you cover my evacuation to the nearest hospital?

A. No, first responders will get you to the closest hospital. EA+ steps in once you are AT the hospital, to begin determining if you are getting proper care and treatment, or need to be evacuated to a different facility.

And an Important Reminder from a Fellow Member

Dear EA+,

A few years back, we had stopped to spend the night in a small Utah town. My wife started feeling very ill and, because she has a heart condition, I raced her to the nearest hospital emergency room.

When we arrived, her blood pressure was dangerously low. The small town facility we were in had no cardiac department so they contacted a larger hospital and the decision was made to air evacuate her to the nearest suitable facility.

In the midst of all the chaos, I completely forgot about my EA+ card!

Three days later, she had made a full recovery and was released from the hospital. I remembered my EA+ coverage and called. It was then that I learned that EA+ has to be contacted during an emergency so they can arrange the services and approve them.

—Ron E.

EA+ replies: This is a key requirement: You must call EA+ during your emergency (and after calling 911) to access your benefits.

That's why it is a good idea to make sure everyone in your traveling party knows about your EA+ coverage and where your I.D. card is. That way, if you are unconscious because of an accident or illness, your traveling companions can find your card, make the call on your behalf and make certain you get all of the assistance you are entitled to receive.

BONUS Blood Clots (Deep Vein Thrombosis)



Airplane travel, especially flights longer than 8 hours, may increase the risk for blood clots, also known as Deep Vein Thrombosis/ Pulmonary Embolism (DVT/PE).

You are at increased risk for DVT/PE if you:

- Have had DVT/PE in the past
- Have had recent surgery (especially abdominal or orthopedic surgery)
- Are pregnant
- Are a smoker
- Are taking hormone replacement therapy
- Have cancer, restricted movement, or a blood-clotting problem

If you have any of these conditions, talk to your doctor before traveling. People at higher risk for DVT/PE may be prescribed medication during travel.

To prevent DVT/PE during flight:

- Stay hydrated
- Wear loose-fitting clothing
- Make an effort to walk and stretch your legs and arms at least once an hour
- Your doctor may recommend that you wear special stockings that reduce leg swelling and encourage blood flow