



**CHAPTER 10**

**AVOIDING  
HIDDEN  
FINANCIAL  
TIME BOMBS**



## HEALTH ISSUES

How's your health?

Probably, it is pretty good right now, but that won't always be the case. There aren't a lot of people who like to think about, much less talk about the day when your health becomes an issue, but pretending the problem doesn't exist won't make it go away.

Sooner or later, everybody gets sick. That includes you too. You are, in effect, a ticking time bomb, and sooner or later, that bomb is going to go off. So what's the solution?

Well, recently, health care in America got a little bit better with the passage of the ACA. You may know it as "Obamacare," but the bottom line is that in the world, the US health care system ranks an abysmal 37<sup>th</sup>. Our health care is the WORST system of any industrialized nation, and we spend more than twice as much for it.

Think about that for just a second. We spend more than double, and get crappier care. How twisted is that? There are a couple of good solutions, however, and we will go over them in detail below:

## MEDICAL TOURISM

Do you know how much Angioplasty costs in the United States? The average is \$27,907. You can get the exact same surgery in Argentina for \$5,246. An Appendectomy? \$13,910 here, and \$1723 in Argentina. Here are some other examples:

- Bypass Surgery: \$75,345 here, \$15,742 in the Netherlands
- C-Section: \$15,240 here, \$2844 in Spain
- Cataract Surgery: \$3762 here, \$1038 in Argentina
- Hip Prosthesis: \$11,806 here, \$3177 in Spain
- Hip Replacement: \$26,489 here, \$6862 in Argentina
- Knee Replacement: \$25,398 here, \$6015 in Argentina
- Normal Childbirth Delivery: \$10,002 here, \$2237 in Argentina

Americans get consistently overcharged for EVERYTHING medical, and there are a lot nations in the world with top quality health care systems. You can make use of any of these to get your medical conditions treated for a song, by comparison.

The problem, of course, is knowing WHERE to go for treatment. Fortunately, we've taken all the guesswork out of the equation for you. Below are the top ten countries for seeking medical care when you are traveling (and if you are following the advice laid out in previous chapters, you will be doing a LOT of traveling!)

## **Thailand**

More than a million people a year travel to Thailand each year, seeking medical treatment of all types. There is a reason for that. The tiny nation boasts some of the best hospitals with the most comprehensive and professional care in the world. It also happens to be about the cheapest care you will find anywhere. While you can get treated for most anything here, more people come seeking cosmetic surgery and rehab services.

## **Mexico**

Another country that sees in excess of a million medical tourists a year, with some 70% of them coming from the United States. Again, medical centers in Mexico are surprisingly modern, and you can receive treatment for any number of conditions, although the most common reasons that medical tourists visit Mexico are to get dental work and to have weight loss surgery performed.

## **Singapore**

Every year, more than a half million medical tourists visit Singapore, which has some of the best and most advanced facilities in the world. There are a stunning 22 JCI accredited facilities, capable of treating a wide variety of conditions. You will be in good hands if you venture to this country!

## India

India is among the most popular medical tourism destinations. It has top notch private hospitals, and the most common conditions that people come seeking treatment for are cardiac and orthopedic procedures.

## Malaysia

Another Asian powerhouse where medical tourism is concerned, and again, featuring numerous state-of-the-art treatment centers. If you suffer from burns, this is the number one place you want to head to for care.

## Argentina

You probably noticed a trend in the cost comparisons we did above. Argentina's hospitals aren't state-of-the-art, but they ARE quite solid. You will receive quality care at drastically reduced prices. A highly recommended medical tourism destination.

## Brazil

Slightly better than Argentina overall, Brazil specializes in plastic surgery, with more than 4500 practitioners in-country. Do not let the focus on plastic surgery fool you though. You can get world class care here, for almost any condition you may have.



## Turkey

Turkey plays host to more than a hundred thousand medical tourists each year, and plays home to a number of Western trained doctors. Procedures here cost on average 60% less than comparable procedures in the United States. Most medical tourists come here for eye-related issues, though again, you can get quality treatment for most any condition you may have.

## Taiwan

With 22 JCI accredited facilities and world-class facilities, Taiwan offers a wide range of treatments at prices that tend to be half what you will find in the United States. Truly a great place to get medical care.

## Costa Rica

While you can get good quality care for most conditions, Costa Rica's specialty is dental care and routine surgical procedures. The best part, it is a relatively little-known medical tourism destination.

## **Places To Avoid**

The places to avoid where medical tourism is concerned are places you probably wouldn't want to get medical treatment anyway. They're either horribly expensive (the United States, Australia), or places that do not have much in the way of medical facilities to begin with (most of Africa, most of Central America—with Panama being the notable exception, and the places in Asia we didn't mention).

The good news here is that the places we've mentioned are scattered all over the globe. We did that on purpose, so that no matter where your travels may take you in the world, there is always going to be a country on the "good list" within fairly easy reach.



## **DIY HEALTH CARE**

You can actually do a lot to improve your health simply by eating right and getting plenty of exercise. If you've followed our advice thus far, you will be eating better than you ever have in your life (thanks to the portable farms), and you will be getting plenty of exercise because you will be a globe-trotting citizen of the world. Beyond that, however, there are a number of things you can do entirely on your own, that will help you stay healthy. Here are a few ideas:

**Technology** – There has been an explosion of tech-based health care solutions that puts the power for a healthier you right at your fingertips. Much of this has been driven by the arrival of the Apple Watch on the marketplace. Given that the watch is worn next to the skin, there are an array of apps that allow you to monitor most of your own vital signs, and store them on the cloud.

You can make these records available to any health care provider you decide to visit, if your condition should worsen beyond your ability to control it, but in the meantime, simply by monitoring your own vitals closely and changing your living and eating habits, you can oftentimes avoid going to the doctor altogether.

One example of a monitoring app is Qardio (<https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/qardio-heart-health-blood/id855275752?mt=8>), which monitors your heart rate and blood pressure. Nike + Run, on the other hand, is a pedometer that can track the distance you've run, walked and biked, and track that information over time. Both of these are invaluable to health maintenance.

In addition to these though, there are a number of web-based clinics that can help you monitor and even diagnose your condition, getting help from trained professionals online, from anywhere in the world. Examples here include:

**First Derm** (<https://www.firstderm.com/>), which allows you to take pictures of skin conditions and upload them to a licensed professional who can help you with a diagnosis and treatment plan.

**Opernative** (<https://www.opternative.com/>), a way to get a cheap eye exam online, again, from anywhere.

**Tinnitracks** (<http://www.tinnitracks.com/en>), a website designed to treat Tinnitus affordably, from wherever you can get an internet connection.



If you think you might need a hearing aid, you can get tested for \$499 online by [Audicus](https://audicus.com/) (<https://audicus.com/>), and forego the \$2,000-\$3,000 charge that most doctors will hit you with.

Of course, DIY health care extends far, FAR beyond techno-gadgets, no matter how cool or helpful they are. Sometimes, decidedly low tech solutions are best. If you've taken our advice so far, then you've got a portable farm set up. There is nothing that says you can't grow your own supply of herbs with known medicinal qualities.

There are a STAGGERING number of field guides for medicinal plant all over the internet. All of these are available for free, and all come from highly respected organizations. We've selected five of the best (attributions are embedded in the PDF's themselves) and included them with your packet. One of them was even written by the World Health Organization (WHO). Armed with this wealth of information, you grow your own highly effective medical treatments.

It doesn't stop there though. At this website: <http://fas.org/irp/doddir/milmed/> you can download a variety of field medical guides, mostly from different branches of the US Military. We've included a total of fourteen free medical guides that cover nearly every symptom and condition you might have. Combined with the medicinal herb manuscripts we've gathered for you, you have literally everything you need to handle a wide range of medical emergencies.

## OTHER TIME BOMBS TO CONSIDER

Remember when we told you all the reasons why you should consider investing overseas? That the US made it hard, and sometimes quite punishing to invest here? Well, now that we've outlined our plan to you, and shown you how, where, and why to invest overseas, we are going to highlight a few "gotchas" that you may not have even known EXISTED in current American tax law.

## RENTAL PROPERTY

If you've purchased a second home, you may be using it as a rental property. If that's the case, you've probably been making repairs and writing them off on your taxes. You've also been claiming other various depreciation credits...possibly for years. Here's what you do not know.

If you own a property that you've rented out and been claiming tax deductions all along, the IRS has "depreciation recapture rules" in place that will impose a hefty tax on all of the depreciation you've formerly claimed. That means that when you sell your property, you won't get nearly as much as you thought you might. In fact, with the sudden appearance of an unexpected tax, you may even face a financial loss. If the rental property in question was a key part of your retirement plan, it could all but ruin you.

### THE HOME OFFICE TIME BOMB

Those same depreciation recapture rules can apply to your home. Increasingly, people are working from home. When they do, they often declare a part of their home as a home office and take depreciation credits accordingly. Again though, when it comes time to sell your home those depreciation recapture rules kick in, and will reduce (sometimes dramatically) the amount you actually get from the sale.