

# MEDICAL TOURISM IN CONTEMPORARY INDIA



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**M**edical treatment costs are exorbitant in the west and hospitals in such countries have long waiting time too, making it difficult for

their patients to get treatment under various schemes, for instance NHS in UK. Countries like Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Africa, and Iraq have out of pocket expenditure of more than 78 per cent and dismal healthcare services. In some cases, patients are not able to afford the post-treatment services in their country and therefore they try to go for cost effective treatment in countries like India and Thailand etc. For instance, a heart bypass surgery in India costs only \$7900 whereas in US it is \$123,000. This is one of the primary reasons that India is witnessing such higher rates of medical tourists in recent years. Not only corporate hospitals but government is also taking initiative to boost the ratio of medical tourists in the

country as Government of India, the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare and the Ministry of Tourism have jointly been promoting India as a health destination. People around the world are coming to utilize the healthcare expertise and infrastructure available in the country. The footfall of international patients in India has increased in the past few years from 75,671 in 2014 to 193,712 in 2016. Patients from Afghanistan, Nigeria, Kenya, Bangladesh, Oman, Uzbekistan, Yemen and Iraq constitute the major foreign tourists' population of India. In the year 2016 and 2017 number of medical visas was around 4,27,014 and 4,95,056 respectively, registering a positive growth of 15.9 per cent. Our nation's quality medical expertise and cost-effective treatments has made it one of the top places for medical tourism. Medical tourism in India is prognosticated to rise to around \$8 billion by 2020.

reduces the hospital stay but the patients can make quicker and better recovery. The safety in any procedures (diagnostics to surgery) has gone up and the priority is always given to patient safety.”

## MONSOON CARE

Food and water borne diseases are very common during the monsoon season. Therefore, eat simple home cooked food as much as possible. In case you are a frequent flyer, keep whole fruits and packed food items with you at all times. Keep yourself hydrated. Mosquito breeding is expected in monsoon season so it is very important to keep your surroundings clean

