



January 2013

## **MEDICAL GUIDELINES FOR TRANSPLANT ATHLETES ATTENDING WORLD TRANSPLANT GAMES DURBAN, SOUTH AFRICA 2013**

Athletes

Congratulations on being chosen to participate in the World Transplant Games. Your involvement in the Games will contribute greatly to donor awareness. You will also increase the positive attitude towards the rich benefits of transplantation. You will enjoy remarkable personal development and world friendships. Probably you will achieve personal bests in your chosen events. There are also possibilities that you will win medals. It is anticipated that you are well advanced in your preparation, your training and in your provision of drugs, supplies, equipment and clothing. The following information is provided as a reminder in your preparation for your travels and competition.

### **1 Medical Certification**

All athletes are required to complete and return the medical certificate for assessment prior to travelling to South Africa. The deadline for submission is 10 May 2013. Teams will be informed of non-compliant participants between 31 May and 5 July 2013.

### **2 Environmental Conditions**

Although the Games are held in the winter in Durban the climate is very mild with daytime temperatures averaging around 24degrees Centigrade. The occasional rain shower can be expected. It is always advisable to have something warm for the evenings. The days can get warm and sometimes humid so it is advisable to stay well hydrated.

### **3 Traffic**

Road traffic is unpredictable and vehicles travel on the LEFT side of the road. Always look **right** first before trying to cross a road. If driving you drive clockwise around roundabouts. Be very watchful of other vehicles and especially minibus taxis that change lanes, stop or move off with very little warning.

### **4 Allergies and other medical condition**

If athletes are allergic to peanuts, bees or latex, it will be necessary to wear a **Medic Alert Bracelet** and if possible carry an EpiPen (auto-injectable) of  $1/1000$  Adrenaline/Epinephrine. A simple antihistamine taken per mouth should be carried if a person is allergic. It is also advisable to make a note of this on the accreditation documents carried with you at all times.

## **5 Hygiene**

The venues for accommodation, dining and competition will all provide safe and hygienic environments, food and liquids. The off campus dining will also be very safe.

Due to the daytime temperatures and humidity participants are advised to stay hydrated. You will be provided with sealed bottled water. Although the water from taps is absolutely safe to drink, a change in local bacteria can still cause traveller-type diarrhoea – bottled water is therefore advised.

## **6 Contagion**

Contagious disease is under constant surveillance in South Africa. In the event of a life threatening disease outbreak, the authorities are well placed to contain the disease and will communicate widely and quickly if a disorder such as “bird flu or H1N1 flu” appears in the community. However, it is the responsibility of the athlete to self report if a fever or a rash should develop.

## **7 Jet Lag**

Long flights are responsible for disturbed patterns of sleep, vibration fatigue and disruption of diurnal rhythms. Also the change in time zones may cause the athletes to miss a medication dose. Athletes should be aware that the above challenges persist for several days, the duration being governed by the number of hours of change in the time zone. If the athlete finds that the South African time zone (GMT +2hrs) is 6 hours ahead of that of your own zone, poor sleeping may persist for a few days. Try to avoid sleeping during daylight.

## **8 Training**

Training requires planning and dedicating a significant amount of time to your preparation. It is necessary to taper before you compete. Therefore in the last week before you travel, your activities should be less intense. Please do not rely on training during the 8 days of the Games as the facilities may be limited and you may do yourself harm.

## **9 Equipment and Supplies**

All equipment, including footwear should be well prepared and worn in. Do not buy new shoes just prior to competition. Please wear footwear in the public showers. Please bring all your own dressings and bandages.

## **10 Medication**

It is vital to ensure that you have a full supply of medication for your trip. In addition it is necessary to have a duplicate supply of medication for the duration of the trip. These supplies should be carried in two separate packages. One package should be kept in your personal belongings and taken as cabin luggage. The other should be packed in a second case. This is to overcome difficulties if one or other supply is lost. Included in your supply should be Panadol, Vick's vapour rub, liniment methyl salicylic acid or deep heat, antiseptic cream, sun screen and a supply of bandages and

dressings which you prefer to use. You may also wish to carry supplementary vitamins and sports electrolyte solutions. ***You should carry a letter from your clinician outlining the drugs which are essential to your health to ensure that the drugs are not confiscated.*** Do not carry drugs of addiction.

## **11 Travel Risks and Prevention**

You should be aware that being restricted in an aircraft cabin will lead to swelling of your ankles. This is not a result of water overload. It is a consequence of decreased muscle activity of your legs. To overcome this it is necessary to wear one way stretch stockings up to the knees to prevent the swelling.

Once the swelling has occurred it is very difficult to overcome. Therefore prevention is the preferred option. You would also be aware of the risk of deep venous thrombosis. This can be overcome to a large extent by exercising in your seat and walking about. Some team members will also have the opportunity to take a 1/4 of an aspirin every day for a week prior to the travel. However this may be contraindicated so you should ensure this is safe before you do so. Please do not use diuretics to remove the ankle swelling.

## **12 Dehydration**

Aircraft travel and competition is associated with a significant dehydration. One of the commonest failures of transplant athletes in transit and in competition is a failure to maintain hydration. Dehydration may cause side effects such as increasing concentration of immunosuppressive drugs and this should be avoided at all costs. It is necessary to carry fluids with you at all times. Bottled water or sports solutions are always safe and you will be supplied with sealed bottled water during your time in Durban.

## **13 Clothing and Keeping Dry**

It will be necessary to have light clothing which will cover you completely. Importantly, if, through your activities your clothing becomes moist, it will be necessary to have a change of clothing. Dryness is a key to good health. Similarly, if after competition you perspire or you are wet, it is necessary to dry off completely. To achieve this it is wise to have a supply of towels.

## **14 Injuries, Illness or Medication Complications**

It is important that if there is any concern at all amongst the athletes or for that matter the supporters, the medical officer should be notified immediately. Pleasingly, the clinical support will be very active and experienced. Please report any infection or rash immediately. A Medical Facility will be available at the International Conference Centre during the day and at night it will be moved to one of the hotels. This means that there will be 24-hr medical services available. Contagion of any viral infection must be prevented.

## **15 Competing Without Injury**

One of the most remarkable characteristics of the games is the success of the physiotherapists and their support for athletes prior to, during and after

competition. On this occasion we will have physiotherapists to care for you. You will be very familiar with the appropriate pre-competition warm up and massage and the importance of stretching and warm down. With these strategies it will be possible to compete on several days without becoming extremely stiff.

## **16 Withdrawal of an Athlete**

An athlete who is in any way concerned about competing or if the medical officer is concerned, then the athlete will be advised to miss certain events. Withdrawal from a sporting event should be seen as a possibility in any athlete's life. Do not compete against medical advice!!

## **17 Failure to Meet Standards**

An athlete may not meet the World Transplant Games standards which have been established over the last 20 years. This circumstance will be brought to the attention of the athlete and the Manager. The athlete will be advised not to compete or not to travel.

## **18 Communication**

The athletes should be aware that the administration of the World Transplant Games will be determined to provide excellent communications. Communications however are always flawed. To overcome this we would recommend that wherever possible telephone communication should be made available so that any confusion will be overcome very quickly. Keep all documents in a safe and accessible location. Double check all dates, times and locations. Call your team manager if you have doubts or require advice.

## **19 Support**

It is vital for all athletes to recognise how important supporters will be to their success. Every effort should be made to ensure that a member of the team (either athlete or supporter) is available during competition so that you may be able to look to a friend for support during the event. Do not compete alone. Please ask for help.

## **20 Diet**

You should not be unwilling to partake in the meals/diet available as it will be carefully prepared with your best interest at heart. However it is important to emphasize that trying new food or dishes may be hazardous for athletes. Please carry cashews, raisins and bananas to the events, to avoid missing a meal. Diabetics should carry sugar lollies. Although food establishments are generally safe, participants are cautioned against trying dishes they are unaccustomed to.

## **21 Skin and Eye Protection**

The South African sun is particularly harsh so please think ahead and carry head protection, sun screen and wear a long sleeved shirt where possible. Try and find shady areas to protect yourself. Sunglasses are required to prevent cataracts.

## **22 Insurance**

A Medical and Repatriation Insurance Policy will be provided by WTGF to cover all participants' medical emergencies during the period of the Games – the cost of this is integral in the registration fee. The policy cover commences at least two days before the start of the Games and ceases at least two days after the closing of the Games. This will not cover illness that started prior to departure for the Games.

Be sure to have additional health and emergency insurance for any associated trips. Please bring these documents with you.

## **23 Teamwork**

The athletes and supporters (including the medical officer) should form a friendly and cohesive team where members can talk openly with each other. Be aware of the wellbeing of other participants. Watch out for athletes with hypoglycaemia (low blood sugar). Hypoglycaemia appears as sweating, confusion and collapse.

## **24 Habits and Illegal Activities**

No team member should smoke or participate in the use of recreational drugs. South African laws are particularly harsh on the use of drugs. We will be entering high security areas where even pseudoephedrine (for sinusitis) may be detected in small quantities by airport security - spectrophotometric screening of bags

## **25 Recreation and Sleep**

Relaxation is vital for health and sporting success as is a sound sleep hygiene. Avoid excess coffee and alcohol to preserve a regular sleep pattern. Strive to stay awake until dark. Be sure to be out in the sun at midday briefly (with protection) to readjust your biorhythms. Be sure to close your blinds or curtains to gain a full night of sleep.

## **26 Advice**

If you have any advice which you wish to share with team members please contact the administration to facilitate dissemination.

## **27 Blood Tests**

These can be arranged through the Games health services.

## **28 Diabetes Mellitus (DM)**

DM is common. Please ensure that all team members carry appropriate sweets for any diabetic team members. Also ensure that you carry sufficient medication and that your team members are aware of your condition.

## **29 Alcohol**

Consumption of excess alcohol is dangerous and can poison organs, cause confusion and falls and MOST importantly alcohol depresses judgement centres in the brain. Under the influence of alcohol the athlete may become involved in fights or illegal activities.

### **30 Vaccinations**

It is a requirement for persons travelling from certain countries, to have a Yellow Fever vaccination – Please check the website: [http://www.doh.gov.za/docs/policy/2011/draft\\_yellowfever.pdf](http://www.doh.gov.za/docs/policy/2011/draft_yellowfever.pdf). Participants should note that travelling to a Yellow Fever Country/area prior to arriving in South Africa, would also necessitate a Yellow Fever vaccination – Entry into SA will be denied without the necessary documentation.

***As the Yellow Fever Vaccine is live, transplant recipients must not have this vaccine. A SPECIAL PROTOCOL will be forwarded to all Team Managers to be followed.***

During the Games participants can be vaccinated against tetanus should they injure themselves. Those who are wanting to travel pre or post the Games should ensure that their tetanus toxoid vaccinations are up to date.

### **31 Medical alert bracelet and medical information card**

It is necessary at all times to wear a medical alert bracelet if the athlete has a serious illness (diabetics) and the provided medical information card must be carried in the identification/accreditation card pouch.

### **32 Misfortune and misadventure**

In anticipation of difficulties, it is recommended that a list of telephone numbers and emergency responses be carried with your ID/accreditation at all times.

### **33 Clinical Research**

Participation in clinical research is worth your consideration. If you are comfortable with participating, please sign the consent Form included on MF2.

### **34 Anticoagulants**

Athletes who are on anticoagulants (Warfarin Clexane) are advised to be extremely vigilant in supervising their therapy. Participation in the games has the effect of either increasing or decreasing clotting.

### **35 Suggestions and Advice**

If you wish to contribute to the conduct of the games or to the research in recipient athletes please advise the Chairman of the medical committee at [wtgf@wtgf.org](mailto:wtgf@wtgf.org)

**36** The LOC requires every person who registers to complete the General Waiver document by signing and dating it and forward the ORIGINAL DOCUMENT to the LOC Offices by not later than 15<sup>th</sup> July 2013. This is additional to the completion of the form during the Online Registration process.

Should you have any questions or comments, do not hesitate to consult your Team Manager or ultimately the WTG2013 LOC at:

Email: [enquiries@wtg2013.com](mailto:enquiries@wtg2013.com)

Telephone: +27 (0)31 466-5289 *(Please take time differences into account when phoning)*

Fax to Email: +27 (0)86 243-0735

or any of the undersigned.

## **SUMMARY**

The supporting staff of the World Transplant Games wishes you success in your preparation for the Games. Every effort will be made to ensure that you have a safe and successful experience participating in the 2013 Games. Any documentation that the team member requires in support of his or her health care should be carried at all times. On occasion it may be necessary to refer the athlete to the local medical services. Appropriate documentation would be valuable on such occasions. Preparation is necessary for both your competition and your health.

We thank you in anticipation.

Yours sincerely,



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