Welcome to GC4!

The Guwahati Comprehensive Cleft Care Centre (GC4) offers year-round, ongoing patient care through the provision of comprehensive medical evaluations, surgery, and post-operative care. Counseling, dentistry, speech therapy, nutrition, and post-operative wound care education is provided for all patients and their families and guardians. We hope that this packet may be informative and allow you to feel ready for your participation at the center. Since Operation Smile’s first mission to Guwahati in 2009, Volunteers such as yourself have provided over 9,300 free surgeries to the children and adults of the state of Assam and Meghalaya. Since opening in May of 2011, more than 6,100 cases have been performed at the Guwahati Comprehensive Cleft Care Centre.

This packet is purely informative - don’t worry there is nothing to fill out! Please read the enclosed information carefully, as there are many details and tips that will prevent headaches, worries, and hassles.

In this document you will find the following information:

- Essential Information for Volunteers/Personnel going to Guwahati Comprehensive Cleft Care Centre
- Travel Tips
- Contact Information Sheet
- Survival Checklist
- Site/Country Specific Information
- Health Recommendations for Travelers

Congratulations, and thank you for joining Operation Smile’s Comprehensive Cleft Care Centre (GC4) in Guwahati, India. Working together, this team provides an opportunity for Indian children with facial deformities to have new lives and brighter smiles; it is going to be a fantastic and incredibly rewarding experience!

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact us at any time.

Best regards,

Mahesh Deori
Director – GC4
(Mobile : +91 9435140047)
Email : mahesh.deori@operationsmile.org

Hiteswar Sarma
Medical Director
(Mobile : +91 94350 16264)
Email : hiteswarsarma@gmail.com
ESSENTIAL INFORMATION AND TRAVEL TIPS

Essential Information for International Volunteers Going to Guwahati Comprehensive Cleft Care Center (“GC4”)

1. **History of GC4**: In February 2011, Operation Smile opened its newest global Comprehensive Care Center in Guwahati, India, where thousands of patients will be treated each year for facial deformities. The Guwahati Comprehensive Cleft Care Center is Operation Smile’s fourth Care Center in India, where the population suffers from a much higher incidence of clefts. To address this overwhelming need, Operation Smile created a unique Public Private Partnership with the Government of Assam. The new facility has the capacity to treat approximately 3,500 patients annually. The goal of this partnership is to ultimately help treat more than 20,000 children and adults in the state of Assam suffering from clefts. The Guwahati center is also emerging as a Center of Excellence in Education and Training for healthcare professionals, and for Research and Development studies.

2. **Transportation in Guwahati**
   a. **Pickup from the airport**: Dr. Goswami, (See contact info) also known as “Doc G,” is in charge of logistics for GC4, and generally arranges this. There should be a driver waiting outside the terminal with a sign that has your name on it. If you do not see anyone, find a pay phone and call Doc G or others at the numbers listed below. It can be difficult to get back inside the airport if you do not have a hard copy of your itinerary, so be sure you do.

   English language skill of drivers is limited. They will take you straight to your where you are staying or GC4 depending on when you arrive.

   b. **Getting to and from GC4**: Those staying at Chandralaya Apartments in Lamb Road have a car/van pick up in front of the apartments sometime between 7:45-8 am. The same vehicle is sometimes available at the end of the day to take you home from the hospital, but if not, you can take a local taxi called an “Auto”, which is basically like a three wheeled golf cart on steroids. When heading to GC4, tell the driver you would like to go to MMC Hospital (Mahendra Mohan Choudhury Hospital at Panbazar), and when heading home be sure to tell them you are heading to Chandralaya apartments on Lamb Road in the Ambari locality. Always negotiate the price before getting in an Auto. It should cost 70-80 Rupees. You can also walk to and from the hospital, which is about 2.2 km.

   c. **Around town/special trips**: You can ask Dr. Goswami if any of his drivers are available. Other options include the Rikshaw, local bus, walking and of course the Auto. If you’d
like to go out of town, try to book a driver through a travel agency. Local volunteers are happy to give advice as they are all accomplished travelers!

3. **Chandralaya Apartment Accommodations:** Most OS volunteers are staying at the Chandralaya apartments. Those of you at Chandralaya can expect the following:

a. **Lodging:** The Chandralaya apartments are located on Lamb Rd, near the intersection with Mani Ram Dewan Rd, just east of the large lake called Digholi Pukhuri. You will have your own room in a 3-bedroom apartment that may be shared with other volunteers, but could be shared with others not affiliated with OS. These apartments are not fancy but reasonable. The important thing is that you will have AC and a hot shower.

b. You will be given a key to your room as well as a key for the main door to the apartment. If you bring an expensive camera or laptop it is recommended to bring it to the center with you. There has been very little problem with things going missing, though the main doors are often left open. If you need the landlord, he has an office on the ground level, next to the elevator. If you can’t find him, there should be some local youngsters running around who work at the apartments and can show you to your room. *Insist* on getting keys to your apartment and to your room, and in case of difficulties, take it up with Dr Goswami. There are also cabinets in the rooms that have keys, so you can lock things in those.

c. **Meals:** Breakfast is served by those youngsters starting around 7:15 in one of the apartments one level above ground. They will provide bananas, eggs, toast and tea or coffee. Consider bringing oatmeal or something else for breakfast, or purchasing bread and coffee locally, if you prefer a different breakfast or time schedule. Though you may want to get to the hospital by Auto a little earlier in the morning, GC4 opens at 8.00 am and the first surgery starts at 8.30 am. The break room at GC4 has a machine that automatically dispenses tea, Nescafe coffee, tomato soup, or plain hot water (great for making instant oatmeal). Lunch is provided at the center every day. Dinner is not provided, so this will be your chance to get out and sample some of the local cuisine. There are a number of places that have good food and are not known to have caused GI problems in OS volunteers, such as Hot Pot, Druhn’s, Quick pick, and Dynasty. You should of course have Cipro or Azithromycin at the ready. Expect to spend anywhere between 100-300 Rs for dinner (or maybe up to 500 if going to a fancy place like the Dynasty).

d. **Water:** Bottled and filtered water is everywhere. You can bring a filter, but you probably won’t use it. Your apartment should have a big jug of filtered water, as does GC4. You can get bottled water at all of the shops and restaurants.

e. **Internet access:** WiFi is available at GC4, but not at the apartments. There are internet cafes near the apartments which you can avail of at rates ranging from Rs 10 to Rs 30 per hour.

f. **Cell phones:** Your cell phone will not work in Assam. A SIM card must be purchased in the state of Assam for your phone to work (assuming it has been unlocked to accept a SIM card from any carrier). Although purchasing a SIM card in Assam is relatively inexpensive the process is tedious and requires filling out multiple forms with a 24-48hr waiting period before it is activated.
4. The Staff at GC4/Contact Information

**Director**: Mahesh Deori (tel. +91 9435140047, omit +91 for local calls)
**Medical Director**: Hitesh Sarma (9435016264)
**Administrator**: Dr. Abani Goswami (tel. +91-9435144695)
**Surgeon**: Gaurav Deshpande (7399905518)
**Surgeon**: Hemanta Kalita (9864011828)
**Surgeon**: Bjorn Schonmeyr (9854032630)
**Surgeon**: Leonardo Carrillo (9706900236)
**Anesthesiologist**: Kamal Kayal (9435030756)
**Anesthesiologist**: Pranjal Bora (9854051288)
**Anesthesiologist**: Pranjal Deka (9854051288)
**Anesthesiologist**: Gaston Echaniz (9854064803)
**Pediatrician**: Bhabesh Doley (8822723555)
**Pediatrician**: Dhruba Choudhury (9435017742)
**Dental Head**: Rasika Jagtap (8752062932)
**ENT Surgeon**: Vivek Agarwal (9864029797)
**Speech Therapist**: Mitali (9678695039)
**Nutrition Program Coordinator**: Rebecca (9864051347)
**Child Life**: Raina (9706435459) Meenakshi (8876825156)
**Nurse Director**: Madhavi Chikhale (9854057408)
**Clinical Coordinator**: Arem Chiru (8486591640)
**International Nurse**: Rosie Borey (+91 9085010812)
**International Nurse**: Kristin Lay (9085010808)
**OR Charge Nurse**: Vahnu Kipgen (8876415087)
**PACU Charge Nurse**: Roni Thiyam (8486175672)
**Pre Post Ward Charge Nurse**: Mawi (8723046411)
**Patient Care Head**: Jonashree (9864279092)
**Patient Recruitment Head**: Dipul (9954205296)
**Special Projects Head**: Runa (9435543787)
**Pharmacy**: Debojita (9854332070)
**Patient Imaging Technician**: Ajoy (9707122895) Tushar (9864346993)

5. The GC4 Unit--What you need to know: GC4 is located within “MMC” Hospital at Panbazar locality of Guwahati. GC4 is located on the 2nd floor of MMC, while the pre-op and post-op ward is on the ground level. The GC4 staff are friendly, hard working, and quick to help. The physical layout of GC4 is outstanding. When you enter GC4, be prepared to place your street shoes in the shoe racks and follow the peculiar, but worthwhile 2 shoe swap out maneuver that has you taking one of the many pairs of shoes on the rack to use within the hallways, PACU and OR lounge. You can choose to walk bare foot in those areas if you prefer. You must then leave the first pair of shoes behind, and don a pair of special OR shoes at the entrance to the electric doors that go into the OR. This helps keep the OR clean. The OR area is in fact very clean, has good lighting including windows with nice views out to the Brahmaputra River, and is air-conditioned. Electricity does go out occasionally, but GC4 is
connected to the backup generator for the hospital, and also has a backup battery if the backup generator fails - so being without power is very unlikely.

6. **Patient screening and surgical schedules:** Patients are screened and scheduled as they come in. There is an Op Smile bus that goes to different communities and brings back patients to GC4 on set days, with a plan to keep a constant flow of patients. Strikes can get in the way of patient flow. You may be asked to screen patients. The medical director and charge nurse usually put together the next day’s schedule during the previous afternoon, using standard Op Smile guidelines such as getting the youngest patients done first.

7. **Things to bring:** The standard Operation Smile Mission Survival Checklist provided to all volunteers going on international missions is a good guideline, with the following exceptions. There was no need to take a set of nice clothes, and nobody was wearing a white lab coat. Cash is difficult to change, so you may prefer to use your debit card (be sure to let your bank and credit card company know you will be in India if you plan to use your plastic there). You can easily buy toiletries, instant coffee, batteries, laundry detergent, etc. etc., near where you will stay. There is an abundance of clean scrubs of various sizes in the changing rooms so don’t feel the need to bring your own. At the end of the day we ask that you put them in the used scrub bin.

### SITE/COUNTRY SPECIFIC INFORMATION

**India**

**Background Note:** India (U.S. Department of State)

[http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/3454.htm](http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/3454.htm)

**Government**

According to its constitution, India is a "sovereign, socialist, secular, democratic republic." Like the United States, India has a federal form of government. However, the central government in India has greater power in relation to its states, and has adopted a British-style parliamentary system.

India’s bicameral parliament consists of the Rajya Sabha (Council of States) and the Lok Sabha (House of the People). The Council of Ministers is responsible to the Lok Sabha.

The legislatures of the states and union territories elect 233 members to the Rajya Sabha, and the president appoints another 12. The members of the Rajya Sabha serve 6-year terms, with one-third up for election every 2 years. The Lok Sabha consists of 545 members, who serve 5-year terms; 543 are directly elected, and two are appointed.

India’s independent judicial system began under the British, and its concepts and procedures resemble those of Anglo-Saxon countries. The Supreme Court consists of a chief justice and 25 other justices, all appointed by the president on the advice of the prime minister.
India has 28 states* and 7 union territories. At the state level, some legislatures are bicameral, patterned after the two houses of the national parliament. The states' chief ministers are responsible to the legislatures in the same way the prime minister is responsible to parliament.

**Principal Government Officials**
President--Pratibha D. Patil
Vice President--Mohammed Hamid Ansari
Prime Minister--Manmohan Singh

**Languages**
Hindi, English, and 16 other official languages.

**Geography**
Area: 3.29 million sq. km. (1.27 million sq. mi.); about one-third the size of the U.S.
Cities: Capital--New Delhi (pop. 12.8 million, 2001 census). Other major cities--Mumbai, formerly Bombay (16.4 million); Kolkata, formerly Calcutta (13.2 million); Chennai, formerly Madras (6.4 million); Bangalore (5.7 million); Hyderabad (5.5 million); Ahmedabad (5 million); Pune (4 million).
Terrain: Varies from Himalayas to flat river valleys and deserts in the west.
Climate: Alpine to temperate to subtropical monsoon.

**Religion**
Hindu 80.5%; Muslim 13.4%; Christian 2.3%; Sikh 1.9%; other groups including Buddhist, Jain, Parsi within 1.8%; unspecified 0.1%.

**Class Structure**
The Hindu caste system reflects Indian occupational and socially defined hierarchies. Ancient Sanskrit sources divide society into four major categories, priests (Brahmin), warriors (Kshatriya), traders/ artisans (Vaishya) and farmers/ laborers (Shudra). Although these categories are understood throughout India, they describe reality only in the most general terms. They omit, for example, the tribal people and those outside the caste system formerly known as "untouchables", or dalits. In reality, Indian society is divided into thousands of jatis--local, endogamous groups based on occupation--and organized hierarchically according to complex ideas of purity and pollution. Discrimination based on caste is officially illegal, but remains prevalent, especially in rural areas. Nevertheless, the government has made strong efforts to minimize the importance of caste through active affirmative action and social policies.
Assam
*Guwahati is located in the State of Assam
The Government of Assam Official Website
http://assamgovt.nic.in/

Situated between 90-96 degree East Longitude and 24-28 degree North Latitude, Assam is bordered in the North and East by the Kingdom of Bhutan and Arunachal Pradesh. Along the south lies Nagaland, Manipur and Mizoram. Meghalaya lies to her South-West, Bengal and Bangladesh to her West.

Assam is rich in natural resources, minerals, forests and water and has vast tracts of fertile land. It is primarily an agrarian economy, with 74% of its population engaged in agriculture and allied activities. Cereals like paddy, wheat and plantation crops like tea are grown extensively. Amongst mineral resources, oil takes the top place. Oil was first struck more than one hundred years ago and the oil well of Digboi and other areas is a major source of fuel for not only the North-East but for the country as a whole.

### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION AND TRAVEL TIPS

**Tickets**

If you notice an error in your travel invoice/electronic ticket, call me (757-321-7766) or Diane Deleo (757-321-7620) immediately. If you would like to make a change to your ticket for personal or recreational purposes after it has been booked, it will be your responsibility to contact Operation Smile’s travel department immediately for instructions regarding your desired change and you will be responsible for any accompanying charges (see Travel Policies from first team packet for more information).

**If you miss a flight...**

If for some reason you miss a flight, don’t panic! Please follow these steps:

1. First, contact Diane Deleo at (757) 321-7620.
2. If you cannot reach her, please call The American Express Travel Desk at 1-800-847-0242 and give them code S-4F7B. They will help redirect you, and the coordinator at the site will be notified of your travel change.
3. If you miss an international connection you can either go to the airline desk, or if you have access to a telephone you can call the American Express International line (313) 271-7887.

**Passports**

Please remember your passport. Believe it or not, we have had cases of volunteers arriving in countries with expired or cancelled passports. It should be valid for 6 months after the mission, June 16, 2012. Having copies of your passport both with you and with your luggage is also a good idea. For your safety, should you lose your passport, you should have a copy of both your passport identification page (the one with your photo) and a copy of your visa page.

**Luggage**

Please try to limit your luggage to one carry-on and one check-in luggage piece. Make sure you follow TSA rules when packing your carry-on (visit www.tsa.gov for more information). Air India
states that in the economy class free baggage allowance for two pieces of luggage. The sum of the 3 dimensions are not to exceed 107 inches and weight must be under 50 pounds or 20 kilos. Operation Smile will not reimburse for the cost of additional luggage charges. In the past, Air India has been very strict with their requirements and charges 123 USD per additional piece from the US to India. For Canadian citizens, the cost goes up to 196.00 CAD. For more information on checked baggage regulations with Air India, please refer to their website at http://www.airindia.in/SBCM5/Webpages/International---Checked-Baggage.aspx?MID=27#. If you have an overnight stay in Delhi or Mumbai your bags will be check to that destination. On the domestic flight to Guwahati you will have a 20 kg weight limit, which is less than international. You may incur an overweight fee.

Please make sure that there is an Operation Smile Luggage Sticker on each item of luggage you plan to bring; you may need to use some duct tape to keep the sticker in place. This will help to identify the luggage at the airport. Also, please remember to check your luggage all the way through to Guwahati.

**Arrival and Departure**

An overnight stay is commonly required on route to Guwahati. This may be either Delhi or Mumbai.

**Directions to the Eaton Smart Hotel:** If Operation Smile India personnel has arranged for you to stay at the Eaton Smart Hotel upon your arrival in New Delhi, make your way to Terminal 3 Building and arrive where you will find the hotel. **If you go through immigration to get your bags, you must NOT leave the airport premises. Proceed to the Departure Terminal within terminal 3 and go to the Eaton Hotel desk which is at the far end of the terminal (past the "B" corridor). Have a print out of your Guwahati e-ticket handy, along with other identification docs available.**

**If staying at the Colonel’s Retreat:** If this is the case you will be met at the airport after you pick up your luggage. Go outside and look for a placard with your name and Op Smile written on it. A car and driver should be arranged for your transfer to the airport in the morning for your final leg of the journey to Guwahati.

To enter the terminal to fly to Guwahati you will need a printed copy of your ticket and your passport. Nothing is free on the flight to Guwahati, including water. When deplaning at Guwahati it is required that you show your boarding pass again.

**Upon Arrival in Guwahati:** Your pick-up has been arranged by Dr. Goswami, the Administrator for the Comprehensive Cleft Care Center. Once you land in Guwahati, there will be a car/driver waiting outside the exit gate with your name displayed on a small board. You will be transported to the Guwahati Comprehensive Cleft Care Center (GC4) or Chandralaya Apartments (Lamb Road Guest House).

You will be required to go through immigration and customs and may be subjected to a random search of your luggage. If this occurs, please be patient and understanding. Make sure you keep copies of any immigration information they give you. If you are traveling before or after the mission you will be responsible for getting to and from the airport. Wearing any Operation Smile gear that you may have may be helpful as you are more easily seen.
Guwahati Comprehensive Cleft Care Centre (GC4)
The Center is open Monday-Friday 8 AM-6 PM. The Center is located within the campus of MMC Hospital, Pan-Bazar, Guwahati 781001, Assam

Chandralaya Lamb Road Apartments
This is where the majority of rotating staff live. They are comprised of units of 3 bedroom/bathroom (lockable) suites, with a common living/dining area and a small kitchen. Limited cooking can be done. There is a refrigerator, and a hotpot. Team members have access to a washing machine in one of the units. There are dishes, linen, & towels for each unit. Meals are cooked by the apartment manager in the 1st floor unit if you want to take advantage of this. Lamb Road is walking distance to the MMC Hospital, approximately 20 minutes.

Landlady at Chandralaya Apartments, Lamb Road - Monisha (+91 9085061961)
She provides laundry for Rs 10 per piece.
Caretaker : Nikunja (+91 9085060996) handles any issues in the flat as well as organizing food preparation.

Excursions
If you have made any special arrangements to travel prior to your participation at the Guwahati Comprehensive Cleft Care Center, all related expenses and logistics will be your responsibility. Unfortunately, we do not have the resources or personnel to make any exceptions in this regard whatsoever.

Phones and Communication
The country code for India is 91. To dial India from the U.S. you will have to dial 011 91 + the number.

Time
India is 9.5 hours ahead of the US Eastern Standard Time Zone.

Money
The best place to get your money exchanged is at the Delhi or Mumbai airport after you pick up your luggage. There are many ATMs available to get Rupees if you have an ATM card. Larger stores and restaurants will take credit cards but cash is your surest bet. You will find that small denominations are easiest to convert – $10 and $20 work best. The unit of currency is the Indian Rupee. The current exchange rate is 56.0465 Indian Rupees (INR) to 1 USD.

Traveler's checks are NOT commonly accepted and can be difficult to convert. Exchanging money on the streets is illegal.

Health
Although no team member has contracted malaria and many choose not to take the prophylaxis, each person should consult the CDC web site for information and decide individually.
**Safety**
Crime exists everywhere in the world! Simple common sense is the best deterrent. I strongly urge all team members to bring a waist pack or body-strapped wallet of some sort to carry your money, passport, airline tickets and other important things with you. DO NOT bring expensive jewelry or leave valuables unattended.

It is also a good idea to make photocopies of your important documents (two copies of IDs and tickets, and front and back copies of credit cards--keep copies separated).

**Weather and Clothing**

**Clothing:** Please be culturally sensitive and dress conservatively at all times. Please be sure to wear tops that cover your shoulders, and pants or skirts that surpass the knees. Women should not skimp, see-through, or tight fitting clothing. It is best to wear baggy, loose-fit clothing while in India.

**Water**
Avoid drinking tap water in India. Bottled water is safe to drink and will be provided for you at the Guest House and available at GC4 too. It is suggested to pack a reusable water bottle to have on-hand.

**Electricity**
You can expect 220V electrical outlets India. Remember to bring an adapter for any electrical devices that you wish to bring with you. An adapter can be purchased from travel stores (such as Franzus) or electronics stores (i.e. RadioShack, Best Buy).

**Personal Health**
You are responsible for bringing your own medications. The following over-the-counter remedies may come in handy:

- Pain Medicine (Tylenol, Motrin, Advil, etc.)
- Anti-Diarrhea medicine (Imodium, Pepto or Lomotil)
- Laxatives

You should speak with your physician concerning any vaccinations that you should have before your trip and ask about what medications you should take with you.

**Food**
There are many small markets in every locality. Some of the more popular places the staff has found include:

- Hot Pot – will deliver, lot of food for low price, walking distance from Lamb Road
- Quick Pick & Chicken Hut – close to Lamb Road
- Dynasty – Close to hospital, 3 restaurants + bar, a little more pricey
- New Zealand Ice Cream Shop – GNB Rd., near Lamb Road has some sandwiches and cakes.
- Silk Route – located on GNB road. Thai food.
Pizza Hut is located within Dona Planet Mall—auto is Rs 100 - 150
KFC is located on GS road auto Rs 80 - 100
Yo China is next to KFC - it is a sit down restaurant
Mainland China is on the top floor of Dona Planet and is a sit down
Café Coffee Day

**Donations**
Operation Smile gladly accepts donations of pre-approved medical supplies for use on missions. Prior to accepting or bringing any donated items for medical use on a mission, please discuss with your program coordinator to ensure these items are pursuant to Operation Smile’s Gift Acceptance Policy. These contributions, if accepted, are tax deductible. PLEASE NOTE: Operation Smile will not provide tax-deductible letters for non essential donated items such as toys, books, gift bags, etc.

**Cultural Sensitivity/Teamwork**
Please remember that you will be acting as an ambassador for Operation Smile. Be sensitive to local customs and procedures and above all be "FLEXIBLE!" There will be other volunteers involved from different countries working at the Centre or if you are part of a mission. Everyone comes together from different backgrounds, experiences and skill levels. It is absolutely vital for everyone to be respectful of philosophical and technical differences that will exist among the team. India in itself is an amazing country, filled with interesting and generous people – you can expect a wonderful and rewarding experience during your time there.

India is a country of time-honored traditions and customs. While you are obviously not expected to get everything right, common sense and courtesy will take you a long way. If in doubt about how you should behave, watch what the locals do, or simply ask; people are generally happy to point you in the right direction and appreciate your sensitivity.

Kissing and hugging in public are not well received, and public nudity is completely taboo. For female travelers at a hotel swimming pool, a swimsuit is acceptable.

It is customary to use your right hand for eating and other social acts such as shaking hands. If you are invited to dine with a family, it is polite to take off your shoes if they do and wash your hands before taking your meal. At a meal, the etiquette is not to help yourself to food – wait to be served or invited to help yourself.

Exercise sensitivity when taking photos of people, especially women, who may find it embarrassing and offensive – always ask first. Taking photos inside a shrine, at a funeral, or at a religious ceremony may cause offense. Shrines hold enormous significance and it is especially important to also be respectful in the way you conduct yourself and dress. Do not wear shorts or sleeveless tops (this applies to men and women) and don’t smoke. Loud and intrusive behavior isn’t appreciated, and neither are public displays of affection. Before entering a holy place remove your shoes. In some places, such as mosques and some Hindu temples, you will be required to cover your head. Indians are more used to the British conventions so it is customary to address local volunteers initially with their formal title, ie. Dr/Mrs/Mr, etc.
*Etiquette advises against touching locals on the head, or directing the soles of your feet at a person, religious shrine, or image of a deity. It’s also offensive to touch someone with your feet.

Please remember that you will be acting as an ambassador for Operation Smile – both inside and outside of the hospital. Be sensitive to local customs and procedures and above all be “FLEXIBLE” (a coordinator’s favorite word!). In India, more so than in some other Operation Smile mission countries, the international volunteers are participating to support the mission run by our local counterparts. They are as excited to work with you you are to work with them. This dynamic is a fundamental principle of Operation Smile’s objectives and is absolutely vital to the success of this mission.

There will be many volunteers involved with this mission from the U.S., India and other countries. They all come together from different backgrounds, experiences and skill levels. It is absolutely vital for us to be respectful of philosophical and technical differences that will exist among our team. When in doubt, just act in the manner you would expect of a visitor in the hospital where you practice, your country of origin or in your personal home.

*Anytime you travel or work in a new place – whether within or outside of your own country – it can take time to become acclimated and to learn how things run. The more information one has before hand, the easier it will be to jump right into all the hard work that awaits! As always, the above information is just to help with your preparation for the trip – please don’t feel intimidated and definitely NEVER, EVER feel afraid to ask questions or make mistakes – that’s just part of learning to work with new people in new places!!

India in itself is an amazing country, filled with interesting and generous people and although it might be challenging at times (especially with our travel to get there) we are also expecting it to be a wonderful and rewarding experience for all involved. Together we are going to work hard to help change the lives of so many Indian children and families – and have a great time while doing it!!
## IMPORTANT CONTACT INFORMATION

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<tr>
<th>Important contacts:</th>
<th>For assistance at Mumbai/ New Delhi:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>For airport pick up/ drop, local transport, housing and general assistance at Guwahati:</td>
<td>Rowena Rodrigues, Administrative Assistant Operation Smile India</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr Abani Goswami</td>
<td>Ashok Guruprasad CHS · B1-2, Ground Floor · 30, Hanuman Road, Ville Parle (East) · Mumbai 400057-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrator, Operation Smile Guwahati Centre</td>
<td>Mobile: +91 94350 16264</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mahendra Mohan Choudhury Hospital</td>
<td>Hitesh Sarma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Panbazar, Guwahati, Assam, India (Pin 781 001)</td>
<td>Medical Director &amp; Plastic Surgeon Operation Smile Guwahati Centre</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mobile : +91 94351 44695</td>
<td>Mobile : +91 94350 16264</td>
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<tr>
<td><a href="mailto:abani.goswami@operationsmile.org">abani.goswami@operationsmile.org</a></td>
<td><a href="mailto:hiteswarsarma@gmail.com">hiteswarsarma@gmail.com</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Mahesh Deori</td>
<td>Operation Smile, Inc.</td>
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<td>Director</td>
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<tr>
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<td><a href="mailto:mahesh.deori@operationsmile.org">mahesh.deori@operationsmile.org</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Dr Rajeev Kapur</td>
<td>American Express Business Travel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chief Medical Officer</td>
<td>Business Hours (9-5 PM EST):</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operation Smile India</td>
<td>757 321 7620</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mobile: +91 93506 30555</td>
<td>After Hours:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="mailto:rajeev.kapur@operationsmile.org">rajeev.kapur@operationsmile.org</a></td>
<td>AMEX 24-hour hotline:</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 800 847 0242</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Collect: +1 313 271 7887</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Centres:**
- Guwahati Comprehensive Cleft Care Centre, Mahendra Mohan Choudhury Hospital, Panbazar, Guwahati – 781 001, Assam, India, Phone +91 97060 91003/ 004
- Head Office: Mumbai Educational Trust Building · 6th floor · General A.K. Vaidya Chowk · Bandra Reclamation · Mumbai 400 050 · Phone +91 (0)22 67060882 · Fax +91 (0)22 67060001

**Registered office:** S-27 · Panchsheel Park · New Delhi 110017

www.india.operationsmile.org
**OPERATION SMILE MISSION SURVIVAL CHECKLIST**

**Tickets & Documents**
- Passport
- Visa
- List of important phone numbers and photocopies of important documents
- Airline tickets
- Picture ID other than passport
- Business cards
- Cash ($300-$400 in new crisp bills)

**Clothes**
- Money belt or other wallet you can hide under your clothes
- Variety of clothes for mild weather that are easy to wash
- One nice outfit for final party – nothing too formal is necessary
- Rain jacket
- Comfortable shoes
- 5 days worth of scrubs – if you are medical personnel
- White lab coat

**Medicine & Health**
- Shampoo / extra soap
- Toothbrush and toothpaste
- Shaving cream and razor
- Suntan lotion / insect repellent
- Athletes foot medicine
- Band-Aids
- Extra eyeglasses / contacts / contact lens solution
- Sunglasses
- Deodorant
- Pain killer / antihistamine / chapstick / cough drops
- Pepto Bismol / Cipro / Immodium
- Laxatives
- Prescription medicine

**Miscellaneous**
- Reading material
- Cards / travel games / musical instruments for down time
- Journal / note pad / pens
- iPod
- Camera and film (if necessary)
- Extra batteries
- Travel alarm clock
- Needle and thread
- Small thermos or water bottle
Before visiting India, you may need to get the following vaccinations and medications for vaccine-preventable diseases and other diseases you might be at risk for at your destination: (Note: Your doctor or health-care provider will determine what you will need, depending on factors such as your health and immunization history, areas of the country you will be visiting, and planned activities.)

To have the most benefit, see a health-care provider at least 4–6 weeks before your trip to allow time for your vaccines to take effect and to start taking medicine to prevent malaria, if you need it.

Even if you have less than 4 weeks before you leave, you should still see a health-care provider for needed vaccines, anti-malaria drugs and other medications and information about how to protect yourself from illness and injury while traveling.

CDC recommends that you see a health-care provider who specializes in Travel Medicine. Find a travel medicine clinic near you. If you have a medical condition, you should also share your travel plans with any doctors you are currently seeing for other medical reasons.

If your travel plans will take you to more than one country during a single trip, be sure to let your health-care provider know so that you can receive the appropriate vaccinations and information for all of your destinations. Long-term travelers, such as those who plan to work or study abroad, may also need additional vaccinations as required by their employer or school.

Although yellow fever is not a disease risk in India, the government requires some travelers arriving from or transiting through countries with risk of yellow fever virus transmission to present proof of yellow fever vaccination. If you will be traveling to India from any country other than the United States or transiting through another country on your way from the United States, this requirement may affect you. For specific requirement details, see Yellow Fever & Malaria Information, by Country.

Be sure your routine vaccinations are up-to-date. Check the links below to see which vaccinations adults and children should get.

Routine vaccines, as they are often called, such as for influenza, chickenpox (or varicella), polio, measles/mumps/rubella (MMR), and diphtheria/pertussis/tetanus (DPT) are given at all stages of
Routine vaccines are recommended even if you do not travel. Although childhood diseases, such as measles, rarely occur in the United States, they are still common in many parts of the world. A traveler who is not vaccinated would be at risk for infection.

Vaccine-Preventable Diseases

Vaccine recommendations are based on the best available risk information. Please note that the level of risk for vaccine-preventable diseases can change at any time.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vaccination or Disease</th>
<th>Recommendations or Requirements for Vaccine-Preventable Diseases</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Routine</strong></td>
<td>Recommended if you are not up-to-date with routine shots, such as measles/mumps/rubella (MMR) vaccine, diphtheria/pertussis/tetanus (DPT) vaccine, poliovirus vaccine, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Hepatitis A or immune globulin (IG)</strong></td>
<td>Recommended for all unvaccinated people traveling to or working in countries with an intermediate or high level of hepatitis A virus infection (see map) where exposure might occur through food or water. Cases of travel-related hepatitis A can also occur in travelers to developing countries with &quot;standard&quot; tourist itineraries, accommodations, and food consumption behaviors.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Hepatitis B</strong></td>
<td>Recommended for all unvaccinated persons traveling to or working in countries with intermediate to high levels of endemic HBV transmission (see map), especially those who might be exposed to blood or body fluids, have sexual contact with the local population, or be exposed through medical treatment (e.g., for an accident).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Typhoid</strong></td>
<td>Recommended for all unvaccinated people traveling to or working in South Asia, especially if staying with friends or relatives or visiting smaller cities, villages, or rural areas where exposure might occur through food or water.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Japanese encephalitis</strong></td>
<td>Recommended if you plan to visit rural farming areas and under special circumstances, such as a known outbreak of Japanese encephalitis, see country-specific information.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Rabies</strong></td>
<td>Recommended for travelers spending a lot of time outdoors, especially in rural areas, involved in activities such as bicycling, camping, or hiking. Also recommended for travelers with significant occupational risks (such as veterinarians), for long-term travelers and expatriates living in areas with a significant risk of exposure, and for travelers involved in any activities that might bring them into direct contact with bats, carnivores, and other mammals. Children are considered at higher risk because they tend to play with animals, may receive more severe bites, or may not report bites.</td>
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*Although no team member has contracted malaria and many choose not to take the prophylaxis, each person should consult the CDC web site for information and decide individually.*
“If you don’t have a smile, I’ll give you one of mine”

~Author Unknown

Remember what ultimately inspires your work, and that everyone on the team is working toward the same goal.
We have all been given a wonderful opportunity.

Thank you very much!