



# PRESS RELEASE

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1602 HUNTINGDON PIKE • MEADOWBROOK, PA 19006  
215-938-3226 • 215-938-3232 FAX

## **Business is Booming at Holy Redeemer's Traveler's Health and Immunization Center**

**(MEADOWBROOK, Pa.)** – Remember when a vacation simply meant a week at the Jersey shore or a camping trip in the Winnebago? While still popular, statistics show that record numbers of Americans are now seeking out more exotic locales and so-called “adventure vacations.”

“There has been a huge upswing in recent years of people traveling to places that are unique or off the beaten path,” says Dr. Michael Lucca, medical director of the Traveler's Health and Immunization Center at Holy Redeemer Hospital and Medical Center. “It used to be an adventure to take a tour through Europe, but now people want to go on an African safari, cruise the Amazon River or bike through Cambodia and Vietnam.”

The result of this trend, plus the increasing number of Americans who regularly travel to places like China or India for work, means a dramatic increase in the number of visits to Holy Redeemer's Travel Center. In fact, November was one of the busiest months ever in the Center's 13-year history.

“The purpose of the Traveler's Center is to provide information, immunizations and counseling for international travelers,” says Lucca. “In a number of foreign countries, you can be exposed to conditions such as poor sanitation and food preparation practices along with infectious diseases which are rare in the United States. Immunizations to protect you from these illnesses are recommended for travel to many countries.”

Lucca says he primarily sees three types of travelers: (1) people who are visiting exotic places for pleasure, (2) businesspeople who travel or live overseas for work, and (3) people who are traveling to developing parts of the world on mission work.

“In addition to providing immunizations, I also spend a lot of time counseling travelers on how to avoid getting sick while overseas and the intricacies of what their health insurance does and does not cover while they're there,” says Lucca. “For example, many people know not to drink the water in certain parts of the world but they may not stop to think that the lettuce in the salad they're about to eat was washed in the local water. Many people also don't know that emergency medical evacuations usually aren't covered by insurance.”

Lucca, who is an avid traveler himself, says he thinks it's wonderful that people are getting out and seeing the world.

“At the same time, it's important that people be adequately prepared and knowledgeable about the potential dangers found in the places they're traveling,” he says. “A little preparation before leaving on vacation goes a long way.”

**Possible interview subject:**

Gail Latimer of Montgomeryville will travel to Tanzania and Kenya in early January for an African safari. She has already visited the Holy Redeemer Travel Center to receive vaccines for polio, hepatitis A and B and yellow fever. She also had prescriptions filled for an antibiotic and malaria medication. She will return to the Travel Center right after New Year's for additional booster shots and is available for interviews.