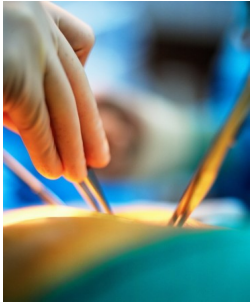


# Medical Tourism or Global Healthcare?



Imagine a patient who needs two operations: A hip or knee replacement surgery that would cost about \$36,600 in the United States, costs only \$4,000 in Malaysia. Heart valve surgery in India can be had for \$12,000, considerably less than the U.S. average of about \$115,000.

Thus, in the USA he would pay more than \$100,000 whereas in India the costs would be less than \$20,000.

The prices of medical and dental care are really high in the USA. This makes patients to go to countries like India, Thailand, and Indonesia where the prices are considerably lower. Such tourism grows into a real industry. People are traveling there not only for cosmetics surgeries as in the past, but much more serious surgeries like heart bypasses, orthopedic surgeries and expensive dental treatments.

But this trend does not include only the USA but also Europe, Canada and Australia. Patients from Canada and the UK travel abroad for surgeries because of long waiting periods in their home countries. Tourists from Asia have long traveled to countries within their region to reduce medical costs.

Critics say that such traveling is dangerous since malpractice legal liability is limited in other countries. But the high cost of malpractice insurance and administrative expenses, is one of the reasons why is the health care in the USA so expensive.

The main destination for the medical tourism is India, where the standards are so high the hospitals perform a wide range of complicated surgeries: heart surgery, laser eye surgery, cosmetic surgery and neurosurgery etc. The countries like India are willing to provide health services to other countries and to become a "global health care destination."

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