

NEED SURGERY? GO TO ISRAEL



Israel is becoming an attractive destination for medical tourists. Its hospitals have state-of-the-art equipment and the staff is very well trained. It is a wanted destination for patients from rich countries like the UK or the US for the treatments are much cheaper here.

For example a bypass surgery that costs approximately \$120,000 can be performed for only \$35,000 in Hadassah University Hospital in Jerusalem. The price usually includes the necessary arrangements, such as airfare, accommodations and food for both patient and their family. Also the waiting times are shorter. In England a patient would have had to wait for 18 months for a knee-replacement surgery, in Israel it could be done in 10 days. Other group of medical tourists is from countries where they can not treat certain diseases. For example bone marrow transplants are demanded by patients from Cyprus because they can not get the treatment in their country.

The popularity of medical tourism over the world rises and Israel witnesses this development as well. In 2006 approximately 15,000 foreigners flew to Israel for complex procedures such as bone marrow transplants, heart surgery and catheterization, oncological and neurological treatments etc.

The rising medical tourism earns money not only by treatments but also by bringing tourist to the country. The people and their family members have to pay for accommodation they eat in local restaurants and use other services. Also popular with medical tourists is the Dead Sea. Its waters are healing for psoriasis patients.

The Israelis want to increase the number of medical tourist coming to the country. Hadassah for example has launched a \$20,000 international Internet campaign to increase the number of medical tourists. Experts believe medical tourists might become one of Israel's main sources of income from tourism. To develop the medical tourism sector even further there is a need for investments in the marketing and infrastructure.

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