



Tortuga Escondida Residency Center

Medical and Evacuation Procedures

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Introduction

Tortuga Escondida Residency Center is a spacious accommodation for groups large and small. Located near the edge of a vast tropical forest, La Selva Maya, we are 10 minutes away from the Caribbean shoreline and Mesoamerican Reef. In both jungle and the sea nature's expressions cause inconveniences for humans. As a base camp for field study and data collection we take our guests safety of utmost importance. Both at the facility and in the field there is great wonder, and some small risks that we have mitigating solutions for.

In this document and the Tortuga Escondida Residency Center Risk Assessment we provide a thorough overview of situations and solutions.

Medical screening

As with all expeditions careful planning is essential to ensure that all individuals enjoy a safe successful trip. Some members of the expedition team (including all volunteers and staff) may have significant pre-existing health problems or disabilities, which in the field, could potentially lead to problems. Please advise the Tortuga Escondida director if there are people in your group who we can accommodate as needed.

Written notice must be given to Tortuga Escondida identifying food allergies. We accommodate special food needs when preparing food for groups.

Roles in the event of an Emergency

Carefully planned evacuation protocols are in place. All staff will have training on the evacuation procedures and protocols.

Once a major incident leading to an evacuation is identified the Center Director will take overall control and will decide the level of emergency evacuation required for the patient. These are classified as either: Medium Priority, High Priority or Emergency.

Medium Priority – Cases in which the patient is in no immediate danger but the onsite facilities are unable to cope were their condition to deteriorate. An example of this would be dehydration due to sickness. This requires the patient to be moved as quickly as possible without the need to hire special vehicles or boats to the nearest appropriate suitable facilities in Playa de Carmen.

High Priority – Cases where the patient's health is at risk if immediate action is not taken. An example of this is a broken bone. This requires transportation, via specially arranged vehicles to medical facilities available in Playa del Carmen in the case of decompression sickness.

Emergency Priority – Cases requiring the fastest possible transfer, usually by air to Rivera Mayan in Playa del Carmen.

Medical Facilities

In Akumal

Suitable for minor incidents and illness.

Dr. Nestor Mendoza Gutierrez

Address: Ave. Gonzalo Mz13 Lote 01 esq. Punta Piedra, Akumal, Quintana Roo, Mexico.

Tel: 984 875 9090/9393 for the Medical Center; 984 806 4616 to speak with a doctor, or 044 984 876 2250 for an ambulance.

Email: dr_nestor_akumal@yahoo.com.mx

A 24 hour medical center complete with pharmacy in the Akumal Pueblo. It has an emergency room, 2 sleep-in observation rooms with private bathrooms, a consulting room, and a pharmacy. The Medical Center and pharmacy are located on the main street in the pueblo one block past the police station.

In Playa del Carmen

Suitable for medium, high and emergency priority evacuations. 30 minute drive.

Hospiten Riviera Maya

Address: Colonia Balamcanché, Lote 1, MZA.30, Carr. Federal, Playacar Fase II en Playa del Carmen C.P. 77710, Quintana Roo, Mexico.

Tel: +52 984 803 1002, Fax: +52 984 803 1606

Email: Rivieramaya@hospiten.com, Website: www.hospiten.es

Hospiten is a small, but very well equipped, Spanish hospital group offering a full medical surface to Western European standards. The hospital contains a trauma department, state-of-the-art equipment, European-trained bilingual doctors, operating rooms, a full stock of medicines, and is suitable for all kinds of diagnosis, treatment and emergency care.

Recompression Chambers

Playa del Carmen International Clinic

SSS Recompression Chamber Network

Address: Avenida 10, esq 28 Nte, Playa del Carmen, Centro, C.P. 77710, Quintana Roo, Mexico

Tel: 984 873 1365

This clinic is on call 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The recompression chambers are run by two qualified doctors and the clinic can also provide emergency medical care, including diagnosis, X-ray, life support and surgery.

Anti-Venom

Anti-venom specific to the vipers and tropical rattlesnake are available in hospitals in Playa del Carmen. Playa del Carmen is a 30 minute drive from the marine sites in Akumal and Xpu Ha. As it is always advisable to administer antivenom in hospital surroundings due to the risk of anaphylactic shock, and patients have up to 4-6 hours following a snake bite before requiring treatment, anti-venom will not be stored on site because patients can be evacuated to a hospital within 3 hours of being bitten. Checks

will be made with each hospital prior to the start of the expedition to ensure that they have sufficient stock of the anti-venoms.

Communications

There is excellent landline and cell phone coverage for the entire Akumal area and so all communications will be made by telephone. Wi-fi internet access.

Transfers

All bus and vehicle transfers have cell phones with the drivers.

Evacuations from Tortuga Escondida

Medium, high and emergency evacuation from the marine sites are by vehicle to Hospiten Riviera Maya Hospital in Playa del Carmen (maximum journey time 30 minutes drive). For emergency evacuations such as spinal injuries, an ambulance will be sent from Hospiten to collect the injured party and transfer them to the hospital (patient will be at the hospital within 1 hour of the telephone call to the hospital).

Mass Evacuations and Disaster Management

The most likely scenario is warning of an impending hurricane. Hurricanes can occur in the Yucatan Peninsula of Mexico at any time from June to November but are most likely in October followed by September. Mexico has an excellent warning system with about a week's advance notice of any hurricanes heading for Mexico. This information phase is succeeded by a Warning Phase if the hurricane is headed for Mexico. If it looks as though a hurricane is headed for Mexico groups may be evacuated to Playa de Carmen.