



Health Advocates, LLC

The Fourteenth Annual International Conference on the Health Risks of Youth

January 7-10, 2025

**Fiesta Americana All-Inclusive and Spa, Puerto Vallarta, México
(Edited 12/08/24)**

Frequently Asked Questions about the ICHRY

1) Do I need a passport?

Answer: Yes. Please make certain your passport is valid for six months past the date of the length of your stay in Mexico. It is also suggested you make a photocopy of your passport and keep it separately from the original. It is also a good idea to ask the front desk attendant at the hotel to make and keep a copy with your portfolio.

2) How do I get to the resort from the airport?

Answer: You are not obligated to use this travel service, but this is the one recommended by the resort event coordinator is Bestours (<https://www.bestours.mx/en>). The contact person with the transportation company is Tomas Gonzalez and you should send your travel info to him at tgonzalez@bestours.com.mx.

He needs your:

- Arrival Date and Time
- Arrival Flight Number
- Departure Date and Time
- Departure Flight Number

Our arrangement is RT from the airport to the hotel for 45.00 (USD) + 16% tax. Groups of 1-6 persons are 120.00 (USD) + 16% tax. You **MUST** register with him in advance, and you cannot make the reservation when you arrive. He prefers payment via Pay Pal but will also accept credit cards or cash when you arrive.

3) Is Mexico safe?

Answer: Parts of Mexico are currently on the State Department do not travel list, but Puerto Vallarta is not. Like traveling in any foreign country, you should be aware of your surroundings and try not to advertise you are a tourist or from the United States. You are perfectly safe while at the resort, but you should use common sense if you go into Puerto Vallarta, and you are **strongly urged to avoid going into town alone.** If you do not speak Spanish, please be sure to have a business card from the hotel to give to cab drivers to make sure you are taken to and from the proper locations. Our resort is in the middle of the tourist section of town, with a great deal of foot and automobile traffic, so please always be aware of your surroundings.

4) How do I pay for items in Mexico?

Answer: Most major U.S. credit cards are accepted in Mexico and at the Fiesta Americana Resort. Charges will be listed in pesos, but your credit card company will convert the charges to U.S. dollars. Many credit card companies charge international transaction fees, so check with your respective credit card company for their policies. **Please note you should notify your credit card company and bank that you are leaving the country, so credit and debit card privileges are not frozen when charges from Mexico start appearing.**

You might have need for some Mexican pesos for local shopping, etc., but most places take credit and debit cards. However, carrying cash is sometimes helpful in negotiating the “best price.”

The conversion rate for U.S. dollars to Mexican pesos is approximately U.S. \$1.00 = 20.67 pesos (as of 12/04/24). You can estimate the conversion rate through several sites including http://coinmill.com/MXN_calculator.html. Please note that currency conversion stands at the airport often have fees associated with each transaction. ATM machines are available in the hotel lobby for peso conversion. Regardless, only receive cash from ATM's that are affiliated with a bank. The commercial ATM's often have very high fees associated with them.

5) What is the best way to communicate with family/friends in United States?

Answer: International cell phone service can be extremely expensive. You are encouraged to establish an account with SKYPE or Zoom or I Phone Face Time through the Internet and use your computer to make phone calls. Also, several US cell phone companies have a standard international phone/texting package that can be purchased by the month and can be started/stopped at any time. Please check with your individual cell carriers for info.

Health Advocates has negotiated free internet service in sleeping rooms, meeting rooms, and public areas of the hotel for all participants, so e-mail, WhatsApp, and Facetime might be the venue with the fewest number of problems. Please see the information below from a web site that discusses issues with cell phones in Mexico:

(<http://www.tomzap.com/telephon.html#cell>).

6) Are meals/drinks included in the cost of conference registration?

Answer: Yes. The Fiesta Americana Resort is all-inclusive meaning all meals and drinks are covered as a part of your hotel room registration. However, certain drinks and meal options are subject to an up-charge, but this additional fee is clearly listed on all bar and food menus. We will have a group opening reception on Tuesday night that is included as well.

7) What is included in my hotel registration?

Answer: Per the Health Advocates contract, your hotel room rate includes ***all*** taxes, fees, and tips, etc. In short, your final bill should reflect the room rate only, with one small exception. There is a government-mandated environmental tax that is approximately 1.90 (USD per day. That is the ***only*** other charge that should appear on your final bill. Please confirm this information when you check in as it is easier to solve these issues ahead of time rather than when you are rushing to leave the hotel. It is also easier for you to try to solve any issues before contacting me. It is often the case that the front desk staff will not share information about your respective reservations, so please try to resolve any issues personally, if possible.

Please be aware that you are automatically tipping the resort staff through your daily room charges. I realize it is awkward situation to receive service from staff and not leave a tip, but do not feel obligated to provide them with an additional tip unless you want to. Also, I conducted a site visit in May and the bartenders have tip jars displayed prominently, but again, they are being tipped through your room reservation and you should not feel obligated to tip further.

8) How do I register for one of the tour packages?

Answer: You can book tours through the hotel concierge or with any of the tour companies at the hotel or available on the web. Health Advocates once attempted to book a group outing, but it ended up being a lot of work with minimal interest.

9) Why do the conference sessions start so early in the day?

Answer: We are starting early in the day to give all participants as much time as possible to enjoy golf, tours, or pool time. We will start and end promptly as scheduled each day of the conference.

10) Will there be handouts at each session?

Answer: Presenters are free to bring hard copy handouts if desired, but the goal is to make this conference as “green” as possible. In the past, I have tried to upload all handouts into one Drop Box folder, but it became too much of a bureaucratic hassle, so each presenter is asked to provide handouts in a manner he/she sees fit (hard copies or electronically). You will be provided with a roster of all participants that includes contact information, so you can always reach out to presenters for presentation materials.

In addition, hard copies of the conference program will ***not*** be provided at the conference. You will be sent an electronic copy of the final program before the end of the year and you can print a copy, should you choose.

11) How do I receive my CHES/MCHES Continuing Education Contact Hours (CECH)?

CHES/MCHES CECH are included in the registration fee and will be provided for each session. Dr. Kelly Wilson is our CECH coordinator and will manage all CECH submission documentation and paperwork. She will make a brief presentation about the process at the conference.

12) What is the "dress code" for the conference?

Answer: The dress code is extremely casual. You should not feel obligated to wear what you might normally wear at a professional conference. For example, slacks, jeans, golf shirts, sundresses, dress shorts, sandals, etc. are perfectly acceptable. Coats and ties for men and closed-toes shoes for women are strictly forbidden. :) Seriously, we want everyone to be comfortable and have an enjoyable time, so common sense is probably the best guide for dress at this conference. Please note that the hotel meeting rooms are often quite cold, so a light jacket or sweater might be a good option.

13) What if I have last-minute questions?

Answer: I am available by phone or text (512-426-6693) through January 4, 2024 , but will be traveling on the 5th . I am always available by e-mail (wileyhealthadvocatesllc@gmail.com), so feel free to shoot me an e-mail as well.

I look forward to seeing each of you and hope you enjoy your time in Puerto Vallarta!