



Expatriate Health
NAVIGATOR

Healthcare Checklist



Your First 30 Days in Mexico

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Welcome! You're about to make your healthcare transition in Mexico so much easier.

Congratulations on planning your move to Mexico!

If you're reading this, you're probably feeling a mix of excitement and anxiety about healthcare in Mexico. That's completely normal.

After helping hundreds of American families and retirees navigate healthcare in my 20+ years as a nurse practitioner and nurse, I can tell you this – healthcare in Mexico is easier, more affordable, and more accessible than most people expect. But having a plan makes all the difference.

This checklist is that plan.

⚠ Important Disclaimer: This checklist provides general informational guidance only and does not constitute medical, legal, or financial advice. Healthcare regulations, insurance requirements, and medication policies change frequently. Always consult with qualified healthcare providers, licensed insurance professionals, and legal experts for advice specific to your situation. Verify all information with official sources before making healthcare decisions.

How to Use This Checklist:

- ✓ **Start 60-90 days before your move** Follow the "Before You Go" section to prepare properly.
- ✓ **Bring it with you** Print this PDF or keep it on your phone for reference.
- ✓ **Check off items as you complete them** There's satisfaction in seeing progress!
- ✓ **Don't stress about perfection** This is a guide, not a rigid requirement. Adapt it to your situation.
- ✓ **Share with friends** Know someone moving to Mexico? Forward this to them!

What You'll Accomplish:

By following this checklist, you'll:

- ✓ Know exactly what to do before you leave
- ✓ Have a clear plan for your first week in Mexico
- ✓ Establish your healthcare system within 30 days
- ✓ Feel confident and prepared (not anxious and overwhelmed)
- ✓ Avoid costly mistakes newcomers often make

Let's get started!

Section 1: Before You Go (60-90 days out)

Preparation prevents problems. These 15 tasks set you up for success

MEDICAL APPOINTMENTS & RECORDS

Task 1: Schedule a comprehensive physical exam

- Why: Get a baseline health assessment before leaving the U.S. healthcare system
- With whom: Your primary care doctor or nurse practitioner
- Timeline: 60-90 days before the move
- What to request:
 - Complete physical exam
 - Blood work (CBC, metabolic panel, lipid panel, A1C if diabetic, TSH if hypothyroid)
 - Blood pressure check
 - Weight and BMI
 - Any overdue screenings (colonoscopy, mammogram, bone density)

Pro Tip: Tell your doctor you're moving to Mexico. They can provide extra guidance on recommended screenings.

Task 2: Visit specialists for any ongoing conditions

- Who to see: Cardiologist, endocrinologist, rheumatologist, etc.
- What to get: Updated treatment plans, medication lists, test results
- Ask for: 6-12 month prognosis and what follow-up you'll need
- Timeline: 60-90 days before move

Task 3: Request copies of ALL medical records

- What to request:
 - Past 2-3 years of visit summaries
 - Current medication list
 - Immunization records
 - Lab results (past year)
 - Imaging reports (X-rays, MRIs, CT scans)
 - Surgical history
 - Allergy list
- Format: Digital (PDF) AND paper copies
- Cost: Usually \$0-\$25 (by law they must provide records when requested)
- Timeline: 60 days before (can take up to 8 weeks to receive)

Task 4: Get medical records translated (for major health issues)

- When needed: If you have a complex medical history or will need specialists right away when you settle in Mexico
- Services: Medical translation services online (\$15-30/page)
- What to translate: Key documents (recent hospital discharge, surgery notes, specialist reports)
- Not necessary to translate: Routine physicals, basic lab work (numbers translate universally)

Task 5: Complete any needed vaccinations

- Standard for Mexico:
 - Hepatitis A (recommended)
 - Hepatitis B (if not already vaccinated)
 - Typhoid (optional, mainly if traveling to rural areas)
 - Tetanus/Diphtheria (update if due)
 - Flu and COVID-19 (stay current)
- Where: Your doctor, travel clinic, or pharmacy (CVS, Walgreens, etc.)
- Timeline: At least 30 days before travel (some require multiple doses)

MEDICATIONS & PRESCRIPTIONS

Task 6: Request a doctor's letter for medications

- What: Letter stating you're under a doctor's care and take specific medications
- Purpose: Customs (if questioned), Mexican doctors (to establish care)
- Include:
 - Your name and DOB
 - List of medications with dosages
 - Doctor's signature and contact info
 - Statement that medications are medically necessary
- A template for this is in **The Complete Healthcare Guide for Mexico** workbook
- Timeline: At physical exam visit
- Get: On official letterhead if possible

Task 7: Get written prescriptions for all medications

- Not all controlled substances are available in Mexico
- Ask your doctor for: Written prescriptions (even if you already have refills)
- Include: Medication name (generic), dosage, frequency, quantity
- Purpose: Show the Mexican doctor or customs if needed
- Timeline: At the same visit as the physical exam

Task 8: Request a 90-day supply of all medications

- From: Your pharmacy and insurance
- Why: Gives you a buffer while establishing care in Mexico
- How: Call the pharmacy and ask for a "vacation override" for an early refill
- Important: This is your backup supply
- Timeline: 30-45 days before move

Task 9: Create a comprehensive medication list

- Include:
 - Generic name (most important)
 - Brand name
 - Dosage
 - Frequency
 - What it's for
 - Prescribing doctor
- Format: Typed, clear, easy to read in both digital and print copies (3 copies)
- A template for this is in **The Complete Healthcare Guide for Mexico** workbook
- Timeline: 60 days before move

Task 10: Research your medications' availability in Mexico

- How: Google "[*your medication name*] + available in Mexico"
- Join: Facebook groups for Mexican expats
- Ask: "Does anyone take [*your medication name*]? Where do you get it?"
- Result: Know which might be challenging
- Our **Medication Access in Mexico: The Complete Guide** has 200+ medications with availability and pricing
- Timeline: 60 days before move

DENTAL & VISION CARE

Task 11: Complete a comprehensive dental exam and cleaning

- Why: Dental care in Mexico is excellent, BUT establish a baseline in the U.S.
- What to complete:
 - Comprehensive exam with X-rays
 - Cleaning
 - Deep cleaning, if recommended
 - Major work: Get a second opinion (might be cheaper in Mexico!)
- Get: Written treatment plan for any future work needed
- Timeline: 60-90 days before move

Task 12: Eye exam and backup glasses/contacts

- Complete exam: Get current prescription for glasses and contacts
- Order: At least one spare pair of glasses
- Stock up: 6-12 month supply of contact lenses (or plan to buy in Mexico - usually cheaper)
- Get a prescription in writing for future orders
- Timeline: 60 days before move

INSURANCE & FINANCIAL

Task 13: Research health insurance options for Mexico

- Medicare: Understand it does NOT cover you in Mexico (except for limited border exceptions)
- **The Complete Healthcare Guide for Mexico** workbook covers the options to research, including:
 - Mexican private insurance
 - International insurance
 - Travel medical insurance
 - Self-pay
- Action: Get quotes from 3-5 companies
- Don't decide yet: Wait until you're in Mexico and understand costs
- Timeline: 60-90 days before move

Task 14: Notify U.S. insurance of your move

- Medicare: Notify Social Security of address change
- Private insurance: Understand coverage termination
- COBRA: Know your options if leaving employer insurance
- Timing: Don't cancel until you have a Mexico plan in place
- Timeline: 30 days before move

Task 15: Set up an international payment method

- Get: Credit card with no foreign transaction fees
- Also get: Debit card for ATM access in Mexico
- Notify bank: You'll be using cards in Mexico (prevent fraud blocks)
- Timeline: 60 days before (cards take time to arrive)

Before moving to the next section, you should have:

- ✓ Comprehensive physical exam completed
- ✓ All medical records in hand (digital + paper)
- ✓ Dental and vision exams done
- ✓ 90-day medication supply
- ✓ Written prescriptions
- ✓ Medication list created
- ✓ Insurance research completed
- ✓ Doctor's letter obtained

Questions? Feeling overwhelmed? This seems like a lot, but spread over 2-3 months, it's manageable. Most tasks take just one phone call or appointment.

Section 2: Final Week Before Move

Last-minute preparations ensure a smooth transition.

Task 16: Organize all medical documents in one folder

- Create: Physical folder + digital folder (Google Drive, Dropbox)
- Include:
 - Medical records
 - Prescriptions
 - Doctor's letter about medications
 - Medication list
 - Insurance information
 - Emergency contacts
 - Copy of this checklist
- Label: "Medical - Mexico" (easy to find)
- Backup: You may lose access to your electronic medical records and patient portals. Email the key documents to yourself, or print hard copies.

Task 17: Pack medications properly for travel

- Pack in: Carry-on luggage (NEVER in checked bags)
- Keep in: Original prescription bottles with labels
- Organize: Clear plastic bag or medication organizer
- Separate: Pack 1-2 weeks' supply separately (in case luggage is lost)
- Include: Written prescription list in medication bag

Task 18: Download essential health apps

- Google Translate: For Spanish-English (works offline)
- Maps: Google Maps (save pharmacy locations offline)
- WhatsApp: Primary communication in Mexico instead of phone numbers
- Your pharmacy app: (U.S. pharmacy for records access)

Task 19: Research pharmacies in your destination city

- Find: 3-5 pharmacies near your new home and download their app (if available)
- Identify: Nearest 24-hour pharmacy
- Save: Addresses in your phone (Google Maps) + WhatsApp or phone number
- Join: Local expat Facebook groups and ask for recommendations

Task 20: Prepare emergency contact card

- Create: Wallet-sized card (lamine if possible)
- Include:
 - Your name and blood type
 - Critical medications
 - Drug allergies
 - Emergency contact (U.S. and Mexico, if you have one)
 - Chronic conditions
 - Insurance information
- Make: 2 copies (wallet + phone case)
- [Template on page 23 of this guide](#)

Task 21: Learn basic Spanish medical phrases

- Essential phrases: [See page 24 of this guide](#) with a more comprehensive list in our template library
- Practice: Pronunciation using Google Translate
- Write: Phonetic pronunciations on a note card
- Relax: Many expat-area pharmacies have English speakers

Task 22: Confirm your housing in Mexico has proper medication storage

- Check: Is there a cool, dry place for medications? In hot climates, some medications need cool storage
- Insulin users: Confirm the refrigerator works
- Plan: Where you'll store your medication supply

Task 23: Take "before" photos of medication bottles

- Why: Shows Mexican doctors exactly what you take
- Photograph: All medication bottles (label clearly visible)
- Save: In phone photo album labeled "Medications"
- Useful if: Bottles are lost, or you need to show the doctor

Before you board the plane, confirm you have:

- ✓ All medications packed in carry-on
- ✓ Medical documents organized
- ✓ Pharmacy locations saved
- ✓ Apps downloaded
- ✓ Emergency contact card
- ✓ Basic Spanish phrases ready

Section 3: Week 1 in Mexico (Days 1-7)

Settle in and scout your healthcare resources.

ORIENTATION & SCOUTING

Task 24: Locate your nearest pharmacies (Day 1-2)

- Visit: Walk or drive to 2-3 pharmacies you researched
- Observe:
 - Hours of operation
 - How busy they are
 - Cleanliness and organization
 - Whether the staff seem helpful
- Introduce yourself: "*Hola, soy nuevo aquí*" (Hello, I'm new here)
- Don't buy yet: Just scouting this week for the one that feels most comfortable.
- Bonus: Prices for common medications are often posted in expat areas

Task 25: Find your nearest 24-hour pharmacy (Day 1-2)

- Locate: Nearest pharmacy open 24/7
- Drive there/use public transit: Know exactly how to get there
- Save: Address and route in Google Maps
- Time it: How long does it take from your home?
- Why: In case of emergency, you already know

Task 26: Join local Facebook groups (Day 2-3)

- Search: "[Your City] Healthcare," "[Your City] Expats," "Healthcare in Mexico"
- Join: 3-5 relevant groups
- Observe: Read posts for a few days before posting
- Learn: Where others get care, common issues, recommendations
- Connect: You're not alone!

Task 27: Locate nearest hospital or clinic (Day 3-4)

- Find: Hospital and/or urgent care clinic near you
- Visit: Drive by to know the location
- Research: Is it accredited? What services are offered?
- Reviews: Check Google reviews, ask in Facebook groups
- Save: Address, phone number, emergency contact info
- Don't wait: Know this BEFORE you need it

□ **Task 28: Set up Mexican phone number (if you haven't) (Day 1-3)**

- Why: Needed for doctor appointments, pharmacy delivery
- Options: Telcel, AT&T Mexico, Movistar
- Get: At pharmacy, convenience store (OXXO), or carrier store
- Set up: WhatsApp with a Mexican number
- Give to: Family, so they can reach you

□ **Task 29: Adjust to altitude/climate if applicable (Week 1)**

- Higher altitude cities: Mexico City, San Miguel de Allende, Guanajuato
- Watch for: Shortness of breath, headaches, fatigue
- Adjust: Medication needs may change (blood pressure, especially), discuss this with your healthcare provider ahead of time
- Hydrate: Extra water at altitude
- Monitor: Blood pressure if you take BP meds
- Note: Usually adjusts in 1-2 weeks

Pro Tip: Discuss with your doctor before moving to Mexico the potential need to adjust your medications due to altitude or humidity changes, so they can provide extra guidance if needed.

By end of Week 1, you should know:

- ✓ Where your pharmacies are
- ✓ Where the 24-hour pharmacy is
- ✓ Where the nearest hospital is
- ✓ How to contact local expats for advice
- ✓ Your new phone number

You haven't set up medical care yet - that's okay! Week 1 is orientation.

Section 4: Week 2 in Mexico (Days 8-14)

Start engaging with the healthcare system.

FIRST INTERACTIONS

Task 30: Make first pharmacy visit (Day 8-10)

- Purpose: Buy something simple (vitamins, pain reliever, or refill one medication)
- Why: Get comfortable with the process, no pressure
- Practice: Use Spanish phrases (see page 24)
- Observe: How the process works, how staff interact
- Ask questions: "¿Habla inglés?" (Do you speak English?)
- Celebrate: You just successfully navigated a Mexican pharmacy!

Task 31: Research English-speaking doctors (Day 8-12)

- Ask in: Facebook groups - "Recommendations for English-speaking [primary care doctor/internist]?"
- Look for: Consistent recommendations (same names mentioned multiple times)
- Research: Google the doctors, check credentials
- Create: List of 3-5 potential doctors with contact info
- Note: Specialties, locations, and whether they accept walk-ins
- Download: New patient forms (if available) to fill out at home in English
- Prepare: Medical history summary
- Why: This makes the first appointment smoother
- A full guide to researching English-speaking doctors is available in the **Healthcare Navigator Masterclass** video course

Task 32: Visit local expat meeting spots (Day 10-14)

- Find: Expat coffee shops, restaurants, clubs
- Go there: Strike up conversations
- Ask: "I just moved here. Do you have a doctor you recommend?"
- Network: Real recommendations are generally some of the best
- Bonus: Make friends, learn about your new community

Task 33: Check medication supply (Day 10-12)

- Inventory: Count how many days/weeks of each medication you have
- Calculate: When you'll need your first refill (aim for before you run out)
- Identify: Which medication will you need first
- Plan: You'll refill this next week (practice run)
- Don't panic: You brought a 90-day supply, you have time

□ **Task 34: Set up pharmacy loyalty cards (Day 12-14)**

- Visit: Your preferred pharmacy
- Ask: "¿Tiene programa de lealtad?" (Do you have a loyalty program?)
- Sign up: Free, just need ID/passport
- Get: Physical card and/or app
- Why: Start earning points on purchases immediately

By end of Week 2, you should have:

- ✓ Made first pharmacy purchase successfully
- ✓ Pharmacy loyalty card
- ✓ List of 3-5 potential doctors
- ✓ Connected with local expats
- ✓ Inventoried your medication supply

Starting to feel more comfortable? Good! Week 3 is when you establish real care.

Section 5: Week 3 in Mexico (Days 15-21)

Establish your healthcare provider relationships.

ESTABLISHING CARE

- Task 35: Schedule appointment with primary care doctor (Day 15-16)**
 - Call: Doctor's office you chose to schedule a "new patient physical exam"
 - Use: WhatsApp if phone call is intimidating (many doctors use it)
 - Ask: "¿Tiene personal que hable inglés?" (Do you have English-speaking staff?) if unsure
 - Book: Appointment for this week or next
 - Cost: Expect to pay \$30-60 USD

- Task 36: Prepare for first doctor appointment (Day 16-20)**
 - Organize: Medical records in chronological order
 - Print: Medication list (even if you have a digital one)
 - Prepare: Brief medical history summary and a list of any questions you have
 - Bring: Letter from U.S. doctor and insurance information (if you have it), cash or credit card (most don't bill insurance directly)

- Task 37: Attend first doctor appointment (Day 17-21)**
 - Arrive: 10-15 minutes early
 - Bring: Passport or ID, residency card, medical records, medication list
 - Discuss: Your health history, current medications, and any concerns
 - Ask: How to contact for questions, how refills work, follow-up schedule
 - Get: Mexican prescriptions for all ongoing medications
 - Ask: For referrals to specialists if needed (cardiologist, endocrinologist, etc.)
 - Clarify: Next steps, when to return
 - Pay: Keep receipt for insurance reimbursement if applicable

- Task 38: Schedule follow-up with doctor (Day 17-21)**
 - Book: 30-60 day follow-up appointment
 - Why: Ensure medications are working, address any concerns
 - Ongoing: Establish regular visit schedule (quarterly, annually, as needed)
 - Relationship: Building an ongoing care relationship is important

Task 39: Fill first Mexican prescription (Day 18-21)

- Go to: Your preferred pharmacy
- Present: Mexican prescription from the doctor
- Verify: Medication is correct (check spelling, dosage)
- Ask: "¿Es genérico o marca?" (Is it generic or brand?)
- Compare: Price to what you paid in the U.S. (celebrate savings!)
- Ask about: Refill process, delivery options
- Save: Receipt for insurance reimbursement

Task 40: Set up pharmacy delivery (if available) (Day 18-21)

- Ask: Your pharmacy if they deliver "¿Hacen entregas?" (Do you deliver?)
- Sign up: Provide address and phone number
- Test: Order something small for delivery
- Verify: The process works and that delivery is reliable
- Save: Delivery number in phone
- Use: For refills, as it saves time

Task 41: Transfer all prescriptions to Mexico (Day 20-21)

- Refill: Any remaining medications you need
- Get: Mexican prescriptions for everything
- Discontinue: US pharmacy auto-refills (if applicable)
- Keep: 30-day backup supply of critical medications (if possible)

Task 42: Set up medication tracking system (Day 20-21)

- Organize: All medications in one place
- Choose system:
 - Phone reminder app
 - Pill organizer
 - Calendar system
 - A combination of the above
- Set reminders: For taking medications (if needed) and for refill dates (1 week before you run out)
- Track: Where you got prescriptions, costs, dates
- Why: Prevents running out, tracks savings

Major accomplishment! By end of Week 3, you have:

- ✓ Established care with a Mexican doctor
- ✓ Mexican prescriptions for all medications
- ✓ Filled first Mexican prescription successfully
- ✓ Medication tracking system
- ✓ Complete emergency contact list

You now have a functioning healthcare system in Mexico!

Section 6: Week 4 in Mexico (Days 22-30)

Establish your primary healthcare relationship.

OPTIMIZATION & LONG-TERM PLANNING

Task 43: Create Mexican emergency contact list (Day 20-21)

- Compile:
 - Your doctor: Name, phone, address
 - Your pharmacy: Name, phone, address
 - Nearest hospital: Name, phone, address
 - 24-hour pharmacy: Name, phone, address
 - Mexican emergency number: 911 (yes, it's also 911)
 - U.S. Embassy: Number and address
 - Trusted expat friend: If you've made one
 - Family in the U.S.: Include them too
- Save: In phone as "Emergency - Mexico" and print a copy to keep with passport
- Share: With family in the U.S.
- A template for this is in **The Complete Healthcare Guide for Mexico** workbook

Task 44: Decide on long-term insurance (Day 23-27)

- Decide: What insurance you need (if any) now that you know actual healthcare costs in your area
- Options:
 - Mexican private insurance (if older or have pre-existing conditions)
 - High-deductible catastrophic (if healthy)
 - Self-pay (if costs are manageable)
 - International insurance (if you travel frequently)
- Apply: If choosing insurance
- Budget: Monthly insurance cost + expected out-of-pocket

Task 45: Find specialists if needed (Day 24-28)

- Research: Credentials, reviews, and locations for specialists referred by your doctor
- Ask: In Facebook groups for recommendations if your doctor did not have any
- Schedule: Appointments soon, if needed
- Know: Where specialists are (may need to travel to a larger city)

☐ **Task 46: Review and celebrate your progress! (Day 30)**

- Reflect: Look at this checklist - you've completed everything!
- Calculate: Total healthcare savings so far
- Journal: How you're feeling about healthcare now vs 30 days ago
- Share: Your success in Facebook groups (help encourage others)
- Celebrate: You've successfully established healthcare in Mexico!

✓ **30-DAY CHECKLIST COMPLETE!** 🎉

Congratulations! You now have:

- ✓ Established relationship with primary care doctor
- ✓ All medications are accessible in Mexico
- ✓ Emergency healthcare plan
- ✓ Long-term insurance decision made
- ✓ Specialists identified (if needed)
- ✓ Pharmacy delivery set up
- ✓ Follow-up appointments scheduled
- ✓ Complete confidence in your healthcare system

You did it! Healthcare in Mexico is no longer a mystery or source of anxiety.

ONGOING TIPS FOR SUCCESS

- ✓ **Build relationships with your healthcare providers** Personal relationships matter in Mexican healthcare. Learn your pharmacist's name, greet your doctor warmly, and be a pleasant patient.
- ✓ **Keep learning Spanish medical terms** Even basic Spanish dramatically improves your healthcare experience.
- ✓ **Stay connected with the expat community** Healthcare information changes. Groups keep you updated.
- ✓ **Never run out of critical medications** Refill when you have 30 days left, not when you're down to 3 days.
- ✓ **Keep records organized** Maintain your medical file. You never know when you'll need it.
- ✓ **Don't assume - ask questions** When in doubt about medications, side effects, or procedures - ask!
- ✓ **Save all receipts** For insurance reimbursement, taxes, or tracking spending.

Congratulations! You Have a Plan. You're Ready for This!

If you've reviewed this entire checklist, you now have a comprehensive roadmap for establishing healthcare in Mexico.

Remember:

- ✓ Thousands of Americans successfully manage healthcare in Mexico
- ✓ The system is actually easier than the US in many ways
- ✓ You'll save 50-80% on medications and care
- ✓ Quality care is available when you know where to look
- ✓ This checklist gives you the step-by-step plan

The biggest challenge isn't the healthcare system—it's overcoming the initial uncertainty.

You now have the plan to overcome that uncertainty.

What to Do Right Now

- **Step 1:** Save this PDF (print or keep on your phone)
- **Step 2:** Start with Section 1 tasks (if you're 60-90 days out)
- **Step 3:** Check off items as you complete them
- **Step 4:** Share this with anyone else planning a move to Mexico

Want More Help?

This checklist covers the first 30 days. But you might want:

📖 The "**Complete Healthcare Guide for Mexico - Workbook**" that dives deeper into transitioning your healthcare to Mexico.

- Includes templates to track health information, providers, and medication
- Walks you through the process of finding the correct insurance
- Telehealth options
- Emergency planning

📖 Complete Medication Guide "**Medication Access in Mexico: The Complete Guide**" that has over 200 commonly prescribed medications with availability and pricing

- Legal requirements for border crossing
- Pharmacy system explained
- Special situations (insulin, controlled substances, biologics)
- **ExpatHealthNavigator.com/medication-guide**

📖 The "**Healthcare Navigator Masterclass**" video course. This 6-part course has over 15 hours of useful information, including:

- Understanding how the healthcare system in Mexico works for foreigners
- Finding and vetting providers
- Insurance decoded
- Chronic disease management
- Emergency planning
- **ExpatHealthNavigator.com/masterclass**

Want More Help?

Free Resources

✉ Weekly Newsletter: Healthcare tips, Mexico updates, and expat stories
Subscribe: ExpatHealthNavigator.com/newsletter

📱 Facebook Group "Expatriate Health Navigator - Mexico"

📄 Blog with articles about healthcare in Mexico
Visit: ExpatHealthNavigator.com/blog

📺 YouTube Channel Video guides and pharmacy tours
Coming soon!

Questions? Need Support?

Email: contact@expathealthnavigator.com

Website: ExpatHealthNavigator.com

Facebook: @Expatriate Health Navigator - Mexico

Emergency Contact Card Template

Instructions: Fill out, print on cardstock, laminate if possible, keep in wallet.

EMERGENCY MEDICAL INFORMATION

Name

Date of Birth

Blood Type

CRITICAL MEDICATIONS

Allergies

Chronic Conditions

EMERGENCY CONTACTS

Doctor Name and Phone

Emergency Contact Name and Phone

Insurance Name, Policy #, Phone

Pharmacy Name and Phone

Insurance Name, Policy #, Phone

EMERGENCY NUMBERS - MEXICO

Emergency: 911

US Embassy: +52-55-5080-2000

Print 2 copies: One for wallet, one for phone case or passport holder.

Essential Spanish Phrases for Healthcare

Practice these before you need them. Pronunciation guide included.

AT THE PHARMACY (En la Farmacia)

Basic Requests:

English	Spanish	Pronunciation
Hello, I need help	Hola, necesito ayuda	OH-la, neh-seh-SEE-toh ah-YOO-dah
Do you speak English?	¿Habla inglés?	AH-blah een-GLACE?
I need this medication	Necesito este medicamento	Neh-seh-SEE-toh ES-teh meh-dee-kah-MEN-toh
How much does it cost?	¿Cuánto cuesta?	KWAN-toh KWEHS-tah?
Do you have generic?	¿Tiene genérico?	tee-EH-neh heh-NEH-ree-koh?
I take this for...	Tomo esto para...	TOH-moh ES-toh PAH-rah...
Do I need a prescription?	¿Necesito receta?	Neh-seh-SEE-toh reh-SEH-tah?
Can you deliver?	¿Hacen entregas?	AH-sen en-TREH-gahs?
I'll come back	Regreso más tarde	reh-GREH-soh mahs TAR-deh
Thank you very much	Muchas gracias	MOO-chahs GRAH-see-ahs

Specific Needs:

English	Spanish	Pronunciation
I need a refill	Necesito resurtir	Neh-seh-SEE-toh reh-soor-TEER
This is urgent	Es urgente	Es oor-HEN-teh
I'm allergic to...	Soy alérgico/a a...	Soy ah-LEHR-hee-koh/kah ah...
Can you write it down?	¿Puede escribirlo?	PWEH-deh es-kree-BEER-loh?
I don't understand	No entiendo	Noh en-tee-EN-doh

AT THE DOCTOR'S OFFICE (En el Consultorio)

Making Appointments:

English	Spanish	Pronunciation
I need an appointment	Necesito una cita	Neh-seh-SEE-toh OO-nah SEE-tah
It's urgent	Es urgente	Es oor-HEN-teh
I'm a new patient	Soy paciente nuevo/a	Soy pah-see-EN-teh NWEH-voh/vah
Next week is fine	La próxima semana está bien	Lah PROHK-see-mah seh-MAH-nah es-TAH bee-EN

During Appointment:

English	Spanish	Pronunciation
I feel...	Me siento...	Meh see-EN-toh...
I have pain here	Tengo dolor aquí	TEN-goh doh-LOHR ah-KEE
I take these medications	Tomo estos medicamentos	TOH-moh ES-tohs meh-dee-kah-MEN-tohs
I need a prescription	Necesito una receta	Neh-seh-SEE-toh OO-nah reh-SEH-tah
When should I return?	¿Cuándo debo regresar?	KWAN-doh DEH-boh reh-greh-SAR?

DESCRIBING SYMPTOMS (Describiendo Síntomas)

Symptoms:

English	Spanish
Pain	Dolor
Headache	Dolor de cabeza
Dizziness	Mareo
Nausea	Náusea
Fever	Fiebre
Cough	Tos
Shortness of breath	Falta de aire

Body Parts:

English	Spanish
Head	Cabeza
Heart	Corazón
Stomach	Estómago
Chest	Pecho
Back	Espalda
Arm	Brazo
Leg	Pierna
Hand	Mano
Foot	Pie

Common Conditions:

English	Spanish
High blood pressure	Presión alta / Hipertensión
Diabetes	Diabetes
Heart disease	Enfermedad del corazón
Arthritis	Artritis
Asthma	Asma
Depression	Depresión
Anxiety	Ansiedad
Allergies	Alergias

EMERGENCIAS (Emergencias)

Critical Phrases:

English	Spanish	Pronunciation
I need help!	¡Necesito ayuda!	Neh-seh-SEE-toh ah-YOO-dah!
It's an emergency	Es una emergencia	Es OO-nah eh-mehr-HEN-see-ah
Call an ambulance	Llame una ambulancia	YAH-meh OO-nah ahm-boo-LAHN-see-ah
I need a doctor	Necesito un doctor	Neh-seh-SEE-toh oon dohk-TOR
Where is the hospital?	¿Dónde está el hospital?	DOHN-deh es-TAH el ohs-pee-TAHL?
I can't breathe	No puedo respirar	Noh PWEH-doh reh-spee-RAR
I have chest pain	Tengo dolor de pecho	TEN-goh doh-LOHR deh PEH-choh

Pro Tip: Download Google Translate to your phone and enable offline Spanish. You can point your camera at signs or prescriptions for instant translation!

One Final Thought

"The healthcare fear is real, but it's based on lack of information, not reality."

You now have the information.

You have the plan.

You have the tools.

The only thing left is to take action.

Welcome to your healthier, more affordable life in Mexico.

To your health and freedom,



Leanna Coy, NP, Healthcare Navigator for American Expats

About the Author



Leanna Coy is a Nurse Practitioner with over 20 years of experience helping older adults and families navigate complex healthcare transitions. Her unique combination of clinical expertise and international living experience makes her the trusted authority for Americans concerned about healthcare abroad.

Credentials:

Family Nurse Practitioner and Registered Nurse

23 years in healthcare

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