

Think safety at all times. An accident will not only ruin your experience in Belize, but likely everyone else's as well.

- **Stay with your "buddy"!** When snorkeling, always stay within a few feet of your buddy and within sight of the larger group you've been assigned to. **Know your buddy's limitations.** Stay within waters shallower than neck deep if that is what your buddy is comfortable with. If you want to snorkel over deeper water, be sure to choose someone with the same desire and swimming ability as your own. If you find that you and your buddy differ, see Dr. Dirnberger before changing buddies. Otherwise, you should have the same buddy throughout the entire 8-day trip (i.e. starting from the Atlanta Airport and ending at the Atlanta Airport).

When we are not snorkeling, you should still know where your buddy is. That means constant communication with one another. If you go to bed, tell your buddy your going back to the cabin. Did he/she get on the boat, plane, bus with you? Etc.

If you are not completely confident of your **swimming ability**, you may also want to bring a "shorty" wet suit or buoyancy compensator vest.

- **No unauthorized swimming or snorkeling.** Remember what happened in the first part of the movie *Jaws*.
- **Stay out of the forest** unless accompanied by one of a guide. There are several dangerous creatures including the [fer-de-lance](#). Even when walking around the grounds of the station, watch where you step. Don't reach into an area that you cannot see into. **Avoid contact with wildlife and even with domesticated animals** including dogs and cats.
- **Be sure to apply plenty of sunscreen and to stay [hydrated](#).** You are in the tropics! Apply sunscreen more frequently than you think you should. The backside of your body is especially susceptible to burn when snorkeling for several hours a day. Even a case of mild sunstroke can ruin your trip.
- **No excessive consumption of alcohol.** Any use of alcohol that interferes with the course or disturbs other students or the staff will not be tolerated. That includes bad hangovers (remember, you will be out on a bouncing boat in the hot sun for many hours each day). Obviously, recreational drugs are not allowed. Your instructors have the right to send you home at your own expense for violating course or university policies.
- **Wash your hands frequently.** We're a large group in tight quarters, so one person's intestinal illness can quickly become everyone else's.
- **Take your meds** (especially your malaria medicine)

So the four general rules to remember:

- **Microbes are the most dangerous organisms we will encounter** (bug spray and hand washing)
- **The other dangerous organisms can mostly be avoided by not sticking your extremities where you cannot see.**
- **The sun is your enemy** (sun screen and hydration)
- **And stick with you buddy!**

Required Vaccinations/Medications Needed:

- Hepatitis A
- Typhoid
- Malaria