

# Pack the right travel policy this holiday

A comprehensive travel plan can help you tide over emergencies

Disha Sanghvi  
disha.s@livemint.com

In June last year, Gurugram-based Gaurav Surana, 33, a business development professional, and a group of nine people planned a holiday in Prague and Frankfurt. Their flight from Frankfurt from Prague got cancelled at the last moment and was rescheduled via Zurich. After a layover of three hours at Zurich, they found that this flight got cancelled too. The group then decided to take a train to Frankfurt. In all this, they lost about 12 hours, but were able to recover the costs of the cancellation, thanks to the travel insurance they had packed in.

Unexpected events can mess up your itinerary and become a financial nightmare. "In most of the developed world, medical expenses are prohibitive due to the skewed conversion rate. Due to flight delays, cancellation, baggage loss or delays, etc., a traveller may face financial penalties," said Bhaskar Nerurkar, head of health claims, Bajaj Allianz General Insurance. That's why having a travel insurance helps. Here's what you should consider when buying travel insurance.

## TYPE OF POLICIES

There are single-trip travel insurance policies as well as year-long multi-trip plans.

A single-trip policy is meant for just one trip, be it domestic or international, for the selected time duration and, typically, comes at relatively lower premiums. It is applicable for the entire trip, i.e., it starts from the time one boards a flight from one's home city or

## THE COVER

Here is what a travel insurance policy, typically, covers

Emergency medical expenses		Loss of checked baggage	
Accidental death and injury		Financial emergency assistance	
Personal liability		Flight delay	
Loss of passport		Trip cancellation*	
Delay of checked baggage		* Insurer is not liable in case of airline insolvency	

Source: Mint research



GRAPHIC: SANTOSH SHARMA/MINT; PHOTO: ISTOCK

country till the return date or end of policy, whichever is earlier. It may also cover specific activities such as adventure sports like bungee jumping and skydiving.

A year-long or annual multi-trip policy is purchased on an annual basis and covers multiple trips taken in a year. "This policy reduces the trouble of issuing individual policies for every trip and is a single, cohesive cover which is applicable for the entire year with cover benefits as stated in the policy," said Nerurkar.

## THINGS TO REMEMBER

The first thing you need to check when buying a travel plan is whether or not basics such as baggage loss, flight delays and trip cancellation are covered. Next, ensure that it covers you during the entire duration of your travel and doesn't kick in only after you

reach the final destination. Also, ensure that the medical cover is extensive.

Another aspect to keep in mind is adequacy of the sum insured. For example, a Schengen visa requires you to take a cover of at least €30,000.

Take note of the exclusions. "Depending upon the type and duration of your trip, take note of what your policy covers. For instance, if you're an adventurous person and have booked an adventure trip, make sure your travel insurance covers

you for any incident occurring out of the adventure activity," said Tarun Mathur, chief business officer, general insurance, Policybazaar.com, an insurance aggregator.

Most insurers offer relevant add-ons such as home burglary, which come at a higher premium. "Travel policies today have multiple variants

rather than add-ons that come with different premiums and offer different types of coverage," said Mathur. For instance, student travel plans typically offer add-ons like alcohol abuse and preventive care covers.

## CLAIMS PROCESS

Going with digital insurers makes the claims process smoother. "You just have to upload or send photos and documents on the website or app and your claim will be processed," said Mathur.

Usually, claims pertaining to medical emergencies are cashless when you're travelling. All you have to do is connect with your third-party service provider to avail the claim. In case of reimbursement claims, you will have to submit all your original bills and supporting documents to your insurer. Note that claims must be filed within seven days of returning from the trip.

So when travelling this summer, ensure you are well protected against emergencies.