

[Going on a trip? Buy travel insurance first](#)

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By Sweetie Salve



Planning a tour requires a lot of investment in terms of hotel booking, travel tickets, etc., but any exigency during a trip can turn a dream vacation into a financial nightmare. A medical emergency, losing one's baggage or last minute cancellations due to death of a close family member are just a few of the mishaps that may strike any time. And being uninsured is not an economically viable option. A travel insurance not only equips one financially, but also assists in several other ways.

Travel insurance claims

Close to 40% of travel claims are made by travellers belonging to the age group of 20-40 years. The average claim size is Rs 2 lakh. This age group is also the most risk averse, ones who feel nothing will happen to them since they are in their primes. Across age groups, there is an aggregate 25% rise in overall claim severity for medical expenses over the last three years.

A travel policy primarily caters to expenses incurred on both inpatient as well as outpatient treatment in case a medical condition is contracted during the travel period. It offers a personal accident benefit offering pre-specified remuneration in case of death/permanent total disablement (paralysis). It also covers accidental hospitalisation expenses in case of injuries during the course of a tour.

Service delivery tool

Insurance companies keep innovating on their service delivery tools. One such recent development is a missed call facility, where a universal number is provided to the customers to dial from anywhere in the world in case of an emergency and a call back is arranged within 5-10 mins providing all the

necessary assistance. For domestic travellers, these insurance companies have tie-ups with hospitals across the country and hence one can avail cashless facilities in such hospitals in the city they are visiting in case of an accidental emergency. Travel insurance policies are equipped with several other added features like hospital daily allowance, emergency medical evacuation, repatriation of remains, etc.

Travel policies also cover accidents that arise as a result of adventure sports. One has to be sure this is an inclusion in a policy and not an add-on cover which will otherwise have to be opted for. The travel policy also protects people against expenses incurred in cutting short the trip or its cancellation owing to the death of a close family member or medical emergency to the policyholder or his/her immediate family.

Flight/train delays due to weather or other external conditions and subsequently missed connections are also covered. Similarly, if you lose your checked in baggage due to theft or hold up or it gets delayed for more than six hours, then the travel insurance policy reimburses for the lost baggage or the additional necessary toiletries, medicines, etc., that you had to purchase as a replacement. An adequate travel insurance which meets the medical and other travel inconvenience needs is highly advisable as it accompanies you as your invisible 24by7 travel buddy, shielding you from the trauma of unknown terrains, people and circumstances.

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