



# WILD EARTH JOURNEYS

## PREPARATION FORM

**“Pilgrimage To Mongolia, Acupuncturists Without Borders”  
World Healing Exchange Program with Photographer Thomas  
Kelly and National Geographic Expert Carroll Dunham  
July 27<sup>nd</sup>- Aug 14<sup>th</sup>, 2010**

1. Please read all materials thoroughly
2. Fill out the Pilgrim (?) Form, digitally photograph or scan and send by email to [carroll@wildearthnepal.com](mailto:carroll@wildearthnepal.com) or fax to 977-1-4438883
3. Fill out the Medical Form and send as above
4. Sign the Release and Risk of Assumption form and send as above
5. Send deposit as per instructions indicated under Terms and Conditions

Dear Fellow Pilgrims,

As we prepare to head off to the Mongol steppe, I feel it important to give you the following information with regard to clothing, basic medical supplies and other necessary and preferred items. It is always best to be aware of the challenges of visiting far-flung and off- the- beaten- track destinations, by being as prepared as possible to meet them.

### TRAVEL:

#### Travel Insurance

If ever there was a country where you needed travel insurance, Mongolia is it. With the outdoor lifestyle, unpredictable weather and bad roads, accidents are not uncommon. Agencies like Council Travel, Trail finders, Flight Center, and Campus Travel sell insurance along with their tickets. Some policies specifically exclude “dangerous activities” which can include horse riding. Ask about an amendment at a higher premium. Few if any medical services in Mongolia will accept your foreign insurance documents for payment; you’ll have to pay on the spot, get receipts for everything, save all the paperwork, and claim later. For Mongolia, a ‘medicav’ clause or policy, covering the costs of being flown to Beijing or Hong Kong or home is essential: staying in a Mongolian hospital will not necessarily improve your state of health. Copies of all important

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documents: (passport data page and visa page, credit cards, travel insurance policy, air/train tickets, etc.). Leave one copy at home and keep another set with you separate from the originals.

## VISAS:

Americans can obtain visas at the airport in Ulaan Baatar for free, good for one month and a maximum of three months. For other nationalities, Every traveler must possess a full valid passport and a tourist visa. You can obtain any type of visa authorization at the Visa and

Passport Division of Mongolian Embassies and Diplomatic Missions, as well as Honorary Consulates of Mongolia in your country. In this case, you are required to have 4 copies of passport size photographs and at least 6 months valid passport and to fill visa application forms. One-month valid tourist visa can be extended only one time by 30 days, but multiple entry visas are available and remain valid for a period of 6 months.

If there is no Mongolian embassy and you are not able to obtain a visa in advance, you can get it at Mongolian borders or at the airport upon your arrival. In this case you are required to have a letter of invitation and also you will pay 50USD for the tourist visa with 30 days validity. Because of bilateral agreements made with some countries, obtaining visa authorization is not always the case. Below is a list of countries with non-visa requirements for all kinds of passport holders.

- \* Malaysia for up to 30 days
- \* Singapore for up to 30 days
- \* Philippines for up to 21 days
- \* USA for up to 90 days
- \* Israel for up to 30 days
- \* DPRK for up to 30 days /private visits need a visa/
- \* Kazakhstan for up to 90 days
- \* Kyrgyzstan for up to 90 days
- \* Cuba for up to 30 days
- \* Laos for up to 30 days /private visits need a visa/
- \* Hong Kong for up to 14 days
- \* Former Yugoslavia for up to 30 days /private visits need a visa/
- Below is list of countries with non-visa requirements for diplomatic and official passport holders.
- \* Russia for up to 90 days

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- \* China no time limit
- \* Republic of Korea for up to 30 days
- \* Thailand for up to 30 days
- \* Hungary for up to 30 days
- \* Czech Republic for up to 90 days
- \* Slovak republic for up to 90 days
- \* Bulgaria no time limit
- \* Romania no time limit
- \* Turkey 30 days
- \* Mexico 90 days

## FLIGHTS:

There are flights to Ulaanbaatar from following cities: Moskow, Beijing, Tian Jin, Hoh Hot, Tokyo, Osaka, Seoul, Berlin, Frankfurt, Milan and Istanbul. For international ticket reservation or more details, please contact a travel agency in your city.

## CUSTOMS AND DUTY:

The following goods may be imported into Mongolia without incurring customs duty such as 200 cigarettes or 50 cigars and 250 grams of tobaccos, wines and spirit not exceeding 1,14 liters, 3 bottles of perfume.

The export of fossils, archaeological items and horns of hunted animals are strictly prohibited without the special permission documents. In Airport "Buyant-Ukhaa" airport tax is levied on all passengers departing from Mongolia. Fee is 12.500 Mongolian togrog.

Every tourist must complete a customs declaration form, which should be retained until departure. This allows free import and re-export of articles intended for personal use for duration of stay.

It is prohibited to import and export:

- \* Guns, weapons and ammunition without special permission
- \* Explosive items
- \* Radioactive substance
- \* Opium, hashish and other narcotics
- \* Pornographic publications
- \* Publications, records, films, pale ontological and archeological findings, collection of various plants and their seeds, birds, wild and domestic animals, raw skins and hides and furs without permission of

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appropriate Mongolian authorities.

## BAGGAGE ALLOWANCE:

Carry on bags – one piece not more than 5kg – the dimensions of carry on baggage should not exceed an overall linear of 11E cm. Each side should not exceed 55cm x 35cm x 25cm including any bag attachments such as handles, wheels etc. Personal belongings such as cameras, glasses etc may be carried on in addition to the above limitation.

Economy Class: 20kg on international flights. Up to 10kg on domestic flights.

## FOR MORE INFORMATION:

[www.visitmongolia.com](http://www.visitmongolia.com)

[www.miat.com](http://www.miat.com)

## AIRPORT PICK UP, DROP OFF AND DEPARTURE TAX:

Travel to the airport and airport departure tax – everyone is on their own. It's \$10 for a taxi to the airport from center of town, and \$12 airport departure tax.

## SECURITY:

At some point in a trip to Mongolia most travelers end up carrying a fair amount US dollars or togrog – all you can do is bury it deeply in your money belt and in several different places, with only small sums in wallets and outside pockets.

Mongolia is like the Wild West. Be careful – we had one friend get his wallet pick-pocketed as he wheeled his trolley out of the airport. The Black Market, which is the cheapest place to buy equipment before we depart, is notorious for its pick pockets and they slice bags – one needs to be very careful. Vigilance and open awareness are useful friends in protecting one's valuables.

## THEFT:

Mongolia is a very safe country and Mongolian people are some of the friendliest and most helpful in Asia. Most Mongolians are very poor and foreign goodies are a real temptation. Theft is seldom and violence against foreigners, just opportunistic. Pick pocketing and bag slitting with razor blades are increasingly common on buses and in the Central Market,

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but not nearly as rife as in China. Valuables should be kept in a money belt and buried under your clothing. Some people find this arrangement uncomfortable, so another alternative is to keep these valuables sewn inside a vest or waistcoat.

- Camp at least 300 – 400 m from nearest gher.
- When building a fire, use existing fire rings whenever possible and use only dead, fallen wood and remember that it is sacred to Mongolians.
- Ensure that you fully extinguish a fire after use. Spread the embers and douse them with water. A fire is only truly safe to leave when you can comfortably place your hand in it.

## MONEY:

### Exchanging Money

Depending on your spending habits and drinking habits, it's always good to have some extra cash at hand - \$300-\$800 depending on what your taste in Mongolian souvenirs is like.

## ULAN BATTAR:

Remember you will be responsible for food and lodging in Ulan Battar – so budget accordingly. We recommend \$100 per night at Ulan Battar Hotel, it is an old Soviet relic, but is centrally located in the center of Sukh Battar Square. Once you let us know you are coming, we will book immediately – transportation and rooms are often booked well ahead, so we recommend an advance to hold a room for you.

At several banks and countless licensed money changers in UB, you can change most European and Asian currencies. The US greenback is still the easiest to change in UB. Note that moneychangers will give you a slightly better rate for new (post 1998) US dollar bills and for higher denominations. In the countryside anything larger than a US\$20 dollar bill will be hard to change. You can change US dollar traveler checks into US cash in UB for a 2% commission. American dollars can sometimes be changed for togrog at banks in aimag capitals but it is bound to take forever as officials try to figure out the official exchange rate, much lower than in the capital. Watch out for counterfeit American dollars in Mongolia.

Most major banks and top-end hotels in UB will change traveler's checks

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but only those in US dollars from major companies usually with no commission and minimum fuss. If you lose your American Express checks or credit card, or Thomas Cook checks, contact Trade and Development Bank in UB.

## CREDIT CARDS:

You can use Visa, MasterCard and American Express in UB at top-end hotels, expensive souvenir shops, airline offices and most travel agencies. The Trade and Development Bank can arrange cash advances on your Visa, MasterCard, and American Express Cards for 4% commission.

International transfers tend to be wrought with problems. It can be done through the Trade and Development Bank and takes 3-5 days and costs \$40 plus 0.01% of the amount transferred.

## CLIMATE:

Only in summer does cloud cover shield the sky. Humidity is zilch and sunshine intense with over 260 sunny days a year. There is a short rainy season from mid July to September, but the showers tend to be brief and gentle. Evenings are cool even in summer due to the relatively high altitude. Mongolia can be a windy place. When the wind blows from the north, temperatures drop sharply, but the weather warms up again just as rapidly. One minute you're walking around in a t-shirt and sandals, the next you need an overcoat and boots and then back to t-shirts. Temperature differences have been known to range over 37.5C in one day.

## CLOTHING & ACCESSORIES: (Suggestions only)

A water resistant duffle bag that locks - combo locks are best to avoid the possibility of losing keys. I suggest you have one duffle bag back and one day pack. If you have a fanny-pack, these can be useful when riding, but are not essential.

Plastic zip lock or cloths bag for gear – cameras, etc., to protect against dirt and dust etc.

Clothes - no special dress codes, but avoid wearing revealing clothes in

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the countryside even on hot summer days. In Ulan Baator dress freely. Warm clothes are needed – summer evenings can be chilly. Bring a long-john set, pile jacket, down vest or jacket, wind-proof Gortex jacket/shell and a warm hat. A good rain shell and pants would be useful. A long sleeved/non-wrinkle light shirt to shield against sun and bugs. Pants are best for horse-riding, in a thin durable material that dries quickly. Some folks have riding pants, others wear biking or yoga shorts underneath to avoid rub. You may consider a photo vest because of the many pockets. A good wide-brimmed hat and sunglasses are essential as the sun can be intense at altitude.

Teva sandals (real or fake!) are good for walking in the rivers. Warm socks are good and warm gloves for long rides late at night.

Other possibilities to consider – a bathing suit and quick drying shammy type towel for those fearless to brisk, pristine rivers. (There will be towels available at camp). Sports bras for well-endowed ladies work well with horses and bumpy jeep rides. An inflatable wrap around neck pillow is useful while bumping across the Mongolian steppes.

Down sleeping bag and inflatable thermorest mat. Mongol mattresses are fairly hard, so you might appreciate the extra softness of your own bag, or go local and don't bring a thermorest. I like to bring a sleeping bag liner, so I can wash that and air out the bag.

## HORSE RIDING:

Riding boots that ride high up the calf are quite helpful for long horse rides to prevent chaffing. You can buy US\$40-90 hand-made leather riding boots on the black market in UB. Thomas rides in his R.M. Williams Australian heeled boots and half leg leather chaps that have a leather elastic band that wraps around the boot. Some folk use chaps, or calf chaps. We will have some western saddles and leather Chinese army saddles with a pronounced pommel in front. If you're prone to getting saddle sores, I encourage you to bring along a sheep fleece and chaps. It is recommended to bring a western style saddle fleece with a strap for padding if you have one.

Do bring a helmet – either a riding helmet if you already have one, or a bike or climbing helmet. Falling off is surprisingly easy to do.

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We are proud to have taken non riders past their 70th decade, introduced them gently to the horse, with no damage to their bodies and incredible enhancement of their spirit! The relationship between human and horse is thousands of years old, and you are in the birthplace of this unbroken relationship, as nearby Scythian (7th century BC) burial sites, with human skeletons buried with horse skulls and 7th vertebrae confirm. The horse has been the carrier of the spirit between this world and the next from earliest times and is a powerful ally for work with the mind: reins not too tight, not too loose, the saddle like a meditation seat, gaze relaxed, but vigilantly aware.

One thing to bear in mind is that when mounting a horse do so only from the left. The animals have been trained to accept human approach from the left and may rear if approached the wrong way. The Mongolians use the word chu! To make their horses go. Most important advice – watch and learn – Mongolians invented horsemanship – and be prepared for at least one good spill.

~PLEASE NOTE THAT NO HORSE RIDING EXPERIENCE IS NECESSARY~

## FISHING EQUIPMENT:

It's good to bring along some medium size hooks if you plan to fish with live grasshoppers. The fly fishing is excellent so bring a fly rod if you like to fish.

## CAMPING:

Mongolia is probably the greatest country in the world for camping. Local people and even a few curious cows or horses may come and investigate our camping spots, but you are unlikely to encounter any hostility.

## Minimum Impact Camping

- Carry out all nonbiodegradable rubbish or bury deeply.
- Make an effort to carry out rubbish left by others.
- Where there is no toilet, choose a spot at least 100m from any water source, bury your waste at least 6 inches deep, and bury or burn toilet paper if possible.
- Wash with biodegradable soap at least 50m (160 ft) away from the water course.

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- Disperse the water widely to allow the soil to filter it fully before it finally makes its way back to the watercourse.
- Don't rely on bought water in plastic bottles. Disposal can be a major problem. Use purification tablets and boiled water instead.

Water bottle: (1 or 2 liter, leak proof metal one can double as a hot water bottle).

Torch: (headlamps are always useful), medical tape (to hold maps together), mosquito repellent (with as much DEET as possible!). High factor sunscreen, multivitamins (use film canisters to cut down on bulk), I will have iodine but if you have special water purification tablets, bring them. If you have a camping water purifying filter bring it along.

Shampoo packets are great and cut down on bulk rather than bottles.

Best is biodegradable soap such as Dr Bonner's etc. Wet wipes or anti-bacterial is useful on the long bus rides as there are few opportunities for bathing. A bandana is always useful against dust.

Photos of your family, stickers or air fresheners for drivers, song books, binoculars for bird lovers, star charts for star lovers.

US dollars cash, money belt, writing paper and envelopes, pens, sticky tape, spare passport photos, Swiss army knife, padlock, spare camera batteries, film, compact digital cards, torch with extra batteries, lighter, compass if you like, razor, razor blades, shaving cream, sewing kit, sun hat, sunscreen (UV) sunglasses, chapstick, vaseline, tampons, dental floss, deodorant, ear plugs, multivitamins, pain killers, laxatives, medical kit, (see below), contact lens solution, plastic bags, candles.

If you have a trekking chair that folds up (Eagle Creek Style) they are quite nice to sit on down near the river, or in the woods or on a mountain peak if you choose to head off for some time on your own.

## ELECTRONICS:

Current in Mongolia runs at 220V. Once we're on the road there is no reliable electricity. When it comes to camera batteries and you don't want to invest in a solar charger or an external portable hard drive, bring enough batteries and compact flash cards. For those that shoot film, you don't really have to worry so much except for the internal camera battery. But while on the road, you can always charge off our Russian jeep support vehicles. You'll have to provide your own cigarette plug-in adaptor or wire directly off the battery but make sure your wires are long enough to take

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your adaptor inside the jeep. There is solar energy supply at the camp.

## MUSE TOOLS:

Slim collection of favorite wilderness poetry, many friends love to paint and draw, play musical instruments or anything inspiring... others simply like to breath in the wilderness...

## HEALTH AND MEDICINE:

### Summary of Risks:

Except for getting frostbite in winter, Mongolia is generally a healthy country to travel in. The dry cold climate and sparse human habitation means few infectious diseases that plague tropical countries. Mongolian food may not taste too good but it's usually safe to eat.

Mongolia however, is a terrible place to get ill. The numbers of doctors are chronically low and the standard of medical training is patchy at best and often very bad. They are struggling to maintain health in a country gone broke.

If you do become seriously ill in Mongolia, there are a few western doctors in UB. If you are suffering from an illness or injury that could be very serious, but not immediately life-threatening, make a beeline for Beijing. In real life-threatening emergency, international medical evacuation services claim they can send a private plane from Beijing to fly you out of Mongolia, but we haven't heard of it happening. This service does not come cheaply, unless you know your travel insurance company will bear the cost, which can be tens of thousands of dollars. Most hospitals and clinics in Mongolia are critically short of medical supplies, especially antibiotics, and it's a good idea to take all your medical supplies with you, especially if you require regular medication. You can hardly be expected to carry your own traveling pharmacy, and as an herbalist I prefer other remedies, these can be helpful friends at the right time if used properly.

If there are specific problems that you would like help planning for, or would like advice, feel free to email me.

You might consider evacuation insurance as Mongolia is a long, long way from anywhere.

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For those from the US, hepatitis A vaccine, typhoid and getting your tetanus updated would be a good idea. Japanese Encephalitis would probably also be a good idea, it exists in China and eastern Russia, I cannot tell about Mongolia. In case you have not vaccinated against or haven't had measles you should get vaccinated. There is plague but unless you are planning to play with marmots, don't worry.

## SUGGESTED MEDICAL LIST:

Aspirin or paracetamol for pain and fever

Ibuprofen for swelling, pain in knees or after any injury

Antihistamine – diphenhydramin (benadryl) for allergies, hay fever, to ease itch from insect bites or stings, prevent motion sickness, itching, watery eyes, runny nose, relieves hives, dermatitis. Can make you quite drowsy. Pseudoephedrine (Sudafed) as a decongestant, it will make a congested nose run.

Cold and flu tablets, throat lozenges, nasal decongestant

Multivitamins

Antibiotics

Loperamide or diphenoxylate – 'blockers' for diarrhea (Imodium or Lomotil) – not to be used with fever or blood or pus in your stools. (I am not a big fan of this – it's for bus rides only if necessary).

Prochlorperazine or metoclopramide for nausea and vomiting

Rehydration mixture

Insect repellent, sunscreen, lip balm, eye drops

Calamine lotion, sting relief spray or aloe vera – eases irritation from sunburn and insect bites and stings

Antifungal cream or powder – for fungal skin infections and thrush

Antiseptic (such as povidone-iodine) for cuts and grazes

Calendula cream

Arnica

Bach Flowers Rescue Remedy if you are into alternative medicines

Bandages, Band-aids (plasters) and other wound dressings

Moleskin or something similar in case of blisters from shoes or sandals

Water purification tablets or iodine

Scissors, tweezers and a thermometer (note that mercury thermometers are prohibited on airlines)

Pepto Bismol tablets

Laxatives – Kaolin or Pectin

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## IMMUNIZATIONS:

No specific vaccinations are legally required to enter Mongolia. Peace Corps Mongolia asks that volunteers have IPV (Inactivated Polio booster dose), mumps, measles, rubella, typhoid, diphtheria, tetanus, rabies, hepatitis B, Japanese Encephalitis B vaccine, Hepatitis A.

Hepatitis A – this vaccine (e.g. Avaxim, Havrix 1440 or VAQTA) provides long term immunity (possible more than 10 years) after an initial injection and booster fix at six to 12 months. Alternatively, an injection of gamma globulin can provide short term protection against Hepatitis A – 2 to 6 months depending on the dose given. It is not a vaccine but a readymade antibody collected from blood donations. It is reasonably effective and unlike a vaccine it is protective immediately, but because it is a blood product, there are current concerns about its long term safety. Hepatitis A vaccine is also available in a combined form with hepatitis B vaccine. Three injections over a six month period are required.

Meningococcal Meningitis – A single injection gives good protection against the major epidemic forms of the disease for 3 years. Protection may be less effective in children under 2 years.

Hepatitis B – travelers who should consider vaccination against Hepatitis B include those on a long trip, as well as those visiting countries with high levels of Hepatitis B infection, where blood infusions may not be adequately screened or where sexual contact or needle sharing is a possibility. Vaccination involves three injections with a booster at 12 months. More rapid courses are available if necessary.

Rabies – Vaccination should be considered by those who will spend a month or longer in the countryside. Pre-travel rabies vaccination involved having three injections over 21 days. If someone vaccinated is bitten or scratched they will only required two booster injections.

Make sure you are healthy before you start traveling. Make sure your teeth are OK. If you wear glasses, take a spare pair.

## BASIC RULES FOR FOOD AND WATER:

Food: We will be using cooks who have experience cooking for westerners and understand our hygienic concerns. Anyone who would like to host chef a meal is more than welcome!

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I strongly recommend bringing a healthy hidden stash of goodies and nibbles. If everyone brings just one food element to offer as Prasad (offerings) for a community meal, it can bring surprise and delight. In the past folks have brought out a hidden stash of pesto, sushi rolls for veggie sushi, miso, spices and cooking herbs, salted nuts, dried fruits etc., for a surprise and delight. But you needn't bring a thing. It's all perfect in its simplicity too.

Peace Corps Mongolia uses the following advice:

## Food Preparation:

1. All fruits and vegetables should be thoroughly washed to remove surface dirt.

All fruits and vegetables which are eaten raw or unpeeled must be soaked for 30 minutes in a bacterial solution. Two iodine tablets dissolved in one quart water provides such a solution. Rinse with cool boiled water.

2. Cook vegetables at a rolling boil for 5 minutes.

3. Fruits and vegetables that can be peeled only require washing to remove surface dirt.

4. Be certain your meat is well-cooked. Raw or rare meats may harbor parasites or bacteria.

5. Store foods properly, foods left at room temperature become contaminated quickly. If it is old or smells bad throw it out.

6. Not all local milk is pasteurized and therefore could harbor tuberculosis and brucellosis. Bringing milk to a rolling boil substitutes for pasteurization. Mongol suutei tsai (milk tea) should be safe since it is boiled. Yoghurt is safe because it is heated during preparation.

7. Eggs should be cooked well as raw egg can be a salmonella carrier. Do not rinse whole eggs in water as shells are porous and this might introduce bacteria into the egg.

## WATER:

Mongolians insist that the tap water in UB is safe to drink. However, there can be occasions in late summer when the water becomes unsafe – but public health alerts are issued. The number one rule is – be careful of the water. If you don't know for certain that the water is safe, assume the worst. Surface water from rivers and lakes may well have been contaminated by livestock feces and should be purified. If you do any

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camping, you may find it occasionally necessary to drink unboiled surface water. It's always better to drink moving rather than stagnant water, and select a stream away from livestock.

It's essential to carry your water bottle with you, regardless of where you are traveling. Dairy products in the countryside are always unpasteurized and should, in theory, be treated with suspicion, though boiled milk is fine if kept hygienically.

The simplest way of purifying water is to boil it thoroughly. Vigorous boiling should be satisfactory. Consider purchasing a water filter for a long trip. There are two main kinds of filter – total filters take out all parasites bacteria and viruses and make water safe to drink. Iodine tablets are effective, and best when used with grapefruit extract to take away the taste. Filters are useful. (At our camp, there will always be hot water available and you can fill your water bottles after dinner and they can make cozy feet warmers until they have cooled down by morning)

## WATER PREPARATION:

1. Boiling is one completely satisfactory method to ensure safe drinking water. A rolling boil for 5 minutes is effective. Store boiled water in clean covered containers.
2. Iodine tablets may be used to treat water. One tablet per quart is sufficient, two if water is cloudy or very cold. Mix well and allow standing for 25 minutes before use.
3. Chlorine bleach 5% active – add two drops of bleach to each liter of water, 4 drops if cloudy. Allow to stand for 30 minutes before use.
4. Filtering water except with very high tech and expensive camping filters is not sufficient. Parasites and bacteria can easily pass through. It will, however make dirty water look and taste more pure. Peace Corps Mongolia advises using boiled water. Use of iodine treatment for your drinking water for more than 6 weeks is not recommended.

Infectious diseases to be aware of in Mongolia – brucellosis, bubonic plague, diarrhea, hepatitis, rabies.

Before you get angry and complain about why things just don't work as well as they could or should, take a second to think about what Mongolia has experienced and is still enduring – years of Chinese domination and

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Soviet Communism, a perverse climate, a terrible road and transport system, lifestyle based on nomadism, which rarely compliments western thinking and economy, a young, sparse population which suffers from poverty and poor health and unrestrained capitalism and development since 1990.

## GHER WELCOME GIFTS:

Cigarettes and vodka (just to promote health!). I tend to bring blessed Buddhist amulets from here in Nepal, which they love, but Ill need to think of something new this year. Instead of sweets for children, I always like to give out kids vitamins. Pictures of horses, cowboys. Tack and horse magazines make great gifts. Small packets of soaps, razors, needles (with large eyes), thread for women, matches, lighters, toothbrushes, toothpaste, strong string, candles, cloth or ribbons, sellotape, notebooks, stickers, coloring books, pens, pencils, and paper for children, puzzles, glue, first aid items, aspirin, hand mirrors, snuff, picture of the Dalai Lama, AA batteries. Make sure gifts are small, otherwise greater expectations for future visitors.

To show respect and avoid arguments, give practical gifts with both hands to the oldest woman and the tobacco, snuff, matches to the oldest man. If your host is cooking for you offer to supply some food, such as biscuits, fruit, salt, rice, pasta and noodles.