



# MEDICAL TRAVEL ADVISORY

MEDICAL TRAVEL QUALITY ALLIANCE

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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Dominican Republic dangerous for medical tourists, risks too high in four other countries: new report from Medical Travel Quality Alliance.

December 21, 2015 – Bangkok and Scottsdale – A new medical tourism report out today from Medical Travel Quality Alliance (MTQUA) warns travelers not to have medical procedures done in Dominican Republic and puts four other countries on a watch list.

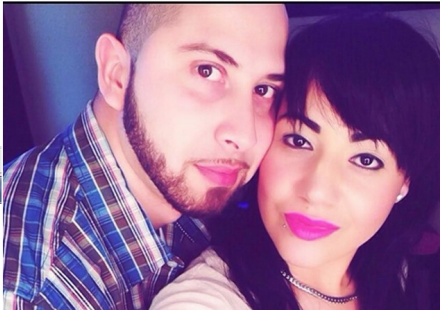
*The Medical Travel Advisory, the first ever issued by the medical tourism industry, identifies an excessive number of deaths and life-threatening infections of medical tourists in Dominican Republic, and cautions medical tourists about specific safety risks in Thailand, Mexico, India and South Korea.*

“We urge medical travelers to seek an alternative to the Dominican Republic,” says Julie Munro, president of MTQUA. “At least four people this year alone have died after surgery that we know of. Dozens more acquired life-threatening infections they had to treat in hospital back home. This is unacceptable.”

### **Bronx woman died seeking cheap tummy tuck surgery in Dominican Republic; her shocked family demands answers**

Beverly Brignoni, 29, flew to Santo Domingo with her boyfriend, Lesley Martinez, for a tummy tuck at a reduced price. But she did not survive the procedure. A doctor told her stunned family she died of a pulmonary embolism.

BY GRIGER ADAMS OTIS / NEW YORK DAILY NEWS / Monday, March 31, 2014, 9:42 PM



As many medical tourists start planning in January for medical travel later in the year, MTQUA cautions them to take greater care when considering medical or surgical procedures in Thailand, South Korea, India and especially in Mexico, where deaths from weight loss and plastic surgery in certain clinics in the border towns of Tijuana and Mexicali have been widely reported in the American media.

Conditions in these countries present unreasonable and unwarranted risk, and possible life-altering harm including poor quality results, disregard for medical traveler safety, and even death, according to MTQUA.

“We are naming the Dominican Republic because this situation has been going on for years. It is widespread and not confined to one or two clinics. Neither the government nor the medical establishment has shown a clear commitment to fix this. Instead, the country continues to promote itself as a preferred medical tourism destination which is absolutely not the case,” says Munro.

For now, Dominican Republic authorities have shut down one clinic but not other clinics that have been identified as the source of life-altering surgical-site infections in medical travelers in reports from as far back as 2003.

MTQUA calls on the governments and the medical profession of these countries to review specific incidents and the underlying reasons why medical tourists are finding themselves at such high risk so

that medical and wellness travel becomes safer and better for all medical tourists.

Medical tourists can keep risks low by using the services of a professional care manager or patient representative at the destination and one who charges a fee for services. Avoid commission agents paid for bringing patients to a hospital or clinic. Hospitals are generally safer than clinics as even registered clinics often don't follow the same cleanliness and sterile procedures, have unlicensed staff, and are not close to emergency facilities.

Download the full Medical Travel Advisory report as a PDF: <http://www.mtqua.org/download-medical-travel-advisory-report/>

***Medical Travel Quality Alliance (MTQUA, <http://mtqua.org>)***, founded in 2009, is an independent international organization that develops and promotes the highest standards of excellence in delivering treatment and care to medical travelers and health tourists. It certifies hospitals, clinics and medical travel service providers worldwide for safety and quality in support of treatment, care and services for medical tourists, and issues an annual list of the Top 10 World's Best Hospitals for Medical Tourists™.

CONTACT:

Caroline Bodanis

Email [caroline@mtqua.org](mailto:caroline@mtqua.org)

Telephone (USA) +1 602-635-4664

(Thailand) +66 85 902 4500

Website <http://www.mtqua.org>