



# Overseas Travel Insurance Plans

## If you are over 70 and ready to sail (or fly)

*"A good traveller has no fixed plans and is not intent on arriving."*

– Lao Tzu

This study is focused on overseas travel insurance plans for senior citizens past the age of 70. As a senior citizen travelling overseas, you may already have some health issues – and if you don't, you may anyway want to cushion yourself against possible illness (the food or the weather may not suit you), injuries, accidents and other unsavoury eventualities or unexpected losses. One way to do that is getting yourself travel insurance. Once you start looking for overseas travel insurance options, you will find that there are actually very few on offer. So, here we are, trying to find out what these companies selling overseas travel insurance offer in terms of benefits. A comparative study of six plans along important variables will also prepare you about what to expect in terms of services and charges.

– Subas Tiwari & Gopal Ravi Kumar

This study does not cover travel to the United States and Canada because insurance companies charge higher rates of premium for standard coverage (some companies add Switzerland too) when it comes to these countries. The reason? The healthcare costs in these countries are steep compared to other countries.

### Inclusions

In general, what are the inclusions in an overseas travel insurance policy?

The following aspects are covered (list is illustrative, not exhaustive):

- Personal accident
- Loss of checked-in baggage
- Delay in checked-in baggage
- Loss of passport
- Personal liability
- Hijack allowance
- Emergency cash
- Trip cancellation/delay (interruption)
- Missed flight connection

### Expect These Exclusions

In general, one can expect that no claims will be entertained on the following (illustrative, not exhaustive):

- Pre-existing/illness/disease/injury/condition
- Travelling against doctor's advice
- Self-inflicted injury, attempted suicide
- Taking part in naval, military or air force operations
- HIV/HIV-related illness including AIDS
- Pregnancy/Childbirth
- Sexual misconduct/communicable disease
- Travel to restricted countries as per government policy (travel advisory)
- Travelling for medical treatment admission
- Indulging in intoxicating drugs/alcohol
- Travel with criminal intent
- Bankruptcy/Liquidation
- Adventure sports like mountaineering, bungee jumping and deep-sea diving

Confirm that your travel insurance plan covers the countries where you will be travelling.

### Options Are Limited

After a thorough search of various insurance companies' websites, we could only short-list six that offered this kind of policy for senior citizens above the age of 70. Clearly, these companies find it risky to extend insurance coverage to them in view of the average age and health profile. In fact, no public sector insurance company offers this policy to this age group. Those who have labelled their policy as overseas insurance actually offer only health insurance coverage/benefits.

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### Takeaways for Consumers

- a) Buy a policy that offers emergency cash/hospital daily allowance in case of sudden hospitalisation.
- b) Opt for a policy that has dental treatment as one of the inclusions.
- c) Make sure it gives you burglary cover at home. If you are travelling for a long time and there is no one back home, it's better to buy a plan that offers coverage for burglary and protection of building.



For the comparative assessment, we chose six plans based on consumer feedback and product structure. The parameters on which we have compared them include maximum entry age, personal liability, loss of checked-in baggage, loss of passport, maximum hijack allowance, missed flight connection, trip delay, trip cancellation or interruption, delay of checked-in baggage, personal accident, emergency cash, and maximum duration of trip. We gave the highest weightage (15 points) to consumer feedback, which helped in determining product quality as well as the most important and beneficial variables. These variables have a direct bearing on the product structure.

To know what kind of travel insurance you will need, you should review your current health conditions, activities you will be participating in during travel, and length of travel.

## CV RECOMMENDATIONS

### Best Buy

#### ICICI Lombard

(International Travel insurance – Senior Citizen Plan)

### Good Buy

#### Religare

(International Travel Explore – Gold)

### Fair Buy

#### Bajaj Allianz

(Travel Elite)

## OVERSEAS TRAVEL INSURANCE PLANS FOR

CV Weightage (Criteria) Points – 100	Variables	ICICI Lombard (International Travel Insurance – Senior Citizen)	Religare (International Travel Explore – Gold)	
	Minimum Entry Age (years)	71	Any	
7	Maximum Entry Age (years)	85 (4)	Any (7)	
5	Maximum Duration of Trip (Days)	360 (5)	365 (5)	
10	Loss of Checked-in Baggage (USD)	500 (10)	100 (4)	
10	Loss of Passport (USD)	300 (10)	300 (10)	
5	Delay of Checked-in Baggage (USD)	100 (5)	100 (5)	
10	Personal Liability (USD)	100,000 (10)	100,000 (10)	
5	Personal Accident (USD)	2,500 (2)	15,000 (5)	
10	Hijack Allowance Maximum (USD)	875 (10)	NS (0)	
5	Emergency Cash (USD)	1,000 (5)	NS (0)	
5	Trip Cancellation and Interruption (USD)	500 (3)	1,000 (5)	
8	Missed Flight Connection (USD)	500 (8)	NS (0)	
5	Trip Delay (USD)	500 (5)	500 (5)	
15	Consumer Feedback	11	9	
	<b>Total</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>65</b>	

Notes:

- Information given here has been sourced from websites, brochures and customer care.
- Sum assured and premium are dependent on individual covers opted for, period of insurance, and risk-bearing criteria.
- We have selected for this study only those companies that offer overseas travel insurance for senior citizens



### SENIOR CITIZENS: A COMPARATIVE CHART

	Bajaj Allianz (Travel Elite)	Tata AIG (Travel Guard Senior Plan)	Chola MS (Overseas Travel Protection – Senior Citizen)	Apollo Munich (Easy Travel – Senior Citizen- Bronze)
	71	71	71	71
	75 (2)	Any (7)	80 (2)	80 (2)
	180 (2)	180 (2)	180 (2)	180 (2)
	500 (10)	500 (10)	250 (7)	Nil (1)
	250 (7)	250 (7)	150 (4)	200 (7)
	100 (5)	50 (3)	100 (5)	Nil (1)
	100,000 (10)	100,000 (10)	Nil (1)	25,000 (5)
	10,000 (3)	10,000 (3)	Nil (1)	10,000 (3)
	300 (5)	Nil (1)	700 (10)	250 (5)
	500 (3)	500 (3)	Nil (1)	Nil (1)
	500 (3)	Nil (1)	Nil (1)	Nil (1)
	NS (0)	Nil (1)	Nil (1)	Nil (1)
	120 (3)	Nil (1)	Nil (1)	Nil (1)
	9	10	4	9
	<b>62</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>39</b>

(above 70 years) on a single trip for sum insured of USD 50,000.

d) Overseas travel for this study excludes visits to the USA and Canada.

e) NS: not specified

f) USD: US dollars

## About Things Travellers Should Know

### Pre-existing medical conditions

Older travellers are more likely to have a pre-existing medical condition (such as hypertension) – and some will find that they are denied cover because of that condition. But there are insurers who will offer cover specifically for older travellers with current or past health issues. With providers that offer holiday insurance for those who are over 70, the screening process will often be more personal and tailored to the individual's own particular medical history.

### Holiday insurance options

If you plan to travel for a longer period, or to several different destinations in one trip (as with many travellers aged over 70), an annual travel policy may be the way to go. This can work out cheaper than buying separate single-trip policies. Equally, if you're not planning on travelling beyond, say, Europe, look for a policy offering annual cover for just Europe, as this can be much cheaper than a worldwide policy.

Check that your policy includes unexpected event cover. In recent years, there have been several incidents that impacted on holidaymakers, including air strikes, civil unrest and the infamous Icelandic ash cloud in 2010, which caused huge disruption. Taking out additional cover to protect against such unexpected issues might be advisable, though it's likely to incur extra cost.

Whatever you do, steer clear of the insurance policy being sold by your tour operator, as it will almost certainly cost you more than one bought independently.

### Information is power

Take the time to research and compare quotes online. Costs for holiday insurance for those over 70 can vary widely. Make sure you read the small print, so you know exactly what you are covered for.

If you find you are turned away by a general insurer for being the wrong age, consider quotes from insurers who specialise in older travellers, as they will base quotes on an individual's health and claims history.

Before you go away on your travels, read up on your destination in guidebooks and online. Also, do a bit of research into the health risks in the country you're visiting. Check if you need any vaccinations or other medication, such as malaria tablets.

### Dos and Don'ts

- Keep your legs moving during a flight to avoid deep vein thrombosis; drink plenty of water; and take a walk at least every couple of hours.
- At your destination, don't drink tap water until you've checked it's safe to do so.
- Make sure your passport is still valid for six months after your return date, and that you've got the necessary visas required for any of the destinations you plan to visit.
- Alert your bank to where you are travelling, and take a note of the emergency number for your bank and numbers of all cards and travellers' cheques.
- Leave contact numbers and an outline of your itinerary with friends or family at home, and stay in touch over phone or email.
- Keep a photocopy of your passport, visa and airline/hotel ticket booking/confirmation in each check-in and cabin baggage.
- Do not keep the original passport, visa copy (if issued separately), and foreign currency and credit/debit cards together (do not keep all eggs in one basket!) – in the event of losing one, you may lose everything.

Courtesy: [www.moneysupermarket.com](http://www.moneysupermarket.com)