

MHGH Release Form

Assumption of Risks & Volunteer Disclosure of Risks and Dangers

Medical Herbalism in Global Health (hereafter known as MHGH) provides the opportunity for various volunteers to attend our delegation in Nicaragua. Volunteers will live and travel while in Nicaragua as the local people do, which may expose her/him to concomitant risks. The list below does not cover every conceivable risk, but is intended to be representative:

General Risks and Dangers: There are general risks associated with all travel. There may be additional risks and dangers on the MHGH trip to Nicaragua.

Transportation: Standards of transportation safety, including but not limited to the following, are lower in Mexico and Central America than in developed countries, and are outside the control of MHGH; the condition, maintenance and safety requirements of surface, air, and water vehicles; the condition, maintenance and policing of roads, airways, and waterways; training and licensing of vehicle operators; requirements for personal safety such as seat belts; travel in the back of an open truck; provision for rescue operations in case of accident; and general safety standards with respect to any aspect of public or private transportation.

Health and Sanitation: Standards of health and sanitation are lower than in the U.S. As a result, a Volunteer may be exposed to contaminated food and water and to other medical problems and diseases endemic to the area, including but not limited to hepatitis A, various gastroenteritis bouts, dengue, malaria, chagas, tuberculosis, parasites including giardia lamblia, entoameoba histolitica, entoameoba coli, various upper respiratory infections including but not limited to pneumonia or asthma, due to volcanic dust, dust in general, open stove cooking over wood, and burning trash.

Medical Care: Medical care in Central America under some conditions are outside the control of MHGH and will be limited or unavailable for the following reasons: limited medical supplies and facilities to treat a condition that otherwise might be manageable, inadequate training of medical personal, limited or non-existent diagnostic tools and laboratories, lack of an ambulance or other medical transportation, and limited or nonexistent communication systems such as radio or telephone. For example, in Nicaragua the Moyogalpa Center of Health, the only 24 hour facility for healthcare on the island, **does not have adequate facilities to treat many emergencies**. Emergencies are taken off the island to Rivas, a one-hour or more boat ride. There are no x-ray machines on the island, oxygen or emergency room service for major surgery. The only MRI and CAT scans, as well as numerous other emergency services may only be located in Managua, a four-hour trip by boat and car.

Bites: A Volunteer Delegate may be exposed to bites from poisonous snakes, insects, spiders, scorpions, etc. Mosquito bites may cause malaria or dengue fever.

Other Conditions: Various other types of risks and dangers occur in Nicaragua because of conditions arising from the fact that it is an underdeveloped country, including but not limited to the following: inadequate supply of life preservers on boats, lack of lifeguards at public swimming places, fewer police and other enforcement officials, criminal or terrorist activity, political unrest, personal or family conflict, uncontrollable disease epidemics, natural disasters including but not limited to volcanic eruptions, earthquakes and hurricanes. Unknown and/or unanticipated risks may be encountered during the trip.

I, the undersigned Volunteer, understand that the risks described above in the *MHGH VOLUNTEER DISCLOSURE OF RISKS AND DANGERS ASSUMPTION OF RISK FORM* exist, and that as a result there is the possibility of serious illness, disability, accident, or even death. I have read completely the "Disclosure of Risk" info above and I have had the opportunity to ask questions about the risks and dangers associated with such a trip. I understand these risks are inherent in the trip, and as a condition of participation in the trip I hereby assume the risks and dangers associated with such a trip voluntarily and without any coercion of any kind.

As a Volunteer I also understand that while MHGH and/or its representatives will make all reasonable efforts to assist me in locating and obtaining first aid and basic medical care should the need arise, MHGH will not assume responsibility for or pay for any medical expenses which I may incur while I am acting as a Volunteer Delegate. I also understand that I am responsible for carrying my own basic Catastrophic Medical Insurance policy or other Travel Medical Insurance. My signature below indicates that I will carry and maintain any additional necessary medical insurance while I am acting as a Volunteer, and that I will be responsible for my own medical expenses. Furthermore, I agree to release and hold harmless, to the fullest extent allowed by law, MHGH, its members, Board of Directors, employees and representatives, from all claims and liabilities resulting from the trip or extended stay with projects related to MHGH.

Printed Name _____

Signature _____ **Date** _____