MEDICINE IN FRANCE
THE FRENCH SYSTEM/SOCIAL SECURITY «SECURITE SOCIALE»

- Run by the Ministry of Health
- In charge of:
  - Family allowances (« allocations familiales »)
  - Pensions (« retraite »)
  - Sickness (« assurance maladie »)
  - Work related accidents and diseases (« accident du travail et malades professionnelles »)
THE FRENCH HEALTH SYSTEM:
ASSURANCE MALADIE

- Organised in centers called CPAM (CAISSE PRIMAIRE d’ASSURANCE MALADIE)
- Website: « ameli.fr »
- Social Security « CPAM » a unique postal address:
  CPAM des Yvelines 78085 YVELINES CEDEX 9
THE FRENCH HEALTH SYSTEM: ASSURANCE MALADIE

- Financed by social taxes
- Covers medical care, pharmacy, biological exams, physiotherapy, x rays and medical imagery.
- "CARTE VITALE" used as an ID but not a pay card!
- Different from the «carte de Sécurité Sociale Européenne».
THE FRENCH HEALTH SYSTEM REIMBURSEMENT

- CPAM provides a scale of reimbursement
- Listed diseases such as diabetes, epilepsy, etc…are reimbursed 100% for any related medical expense, but….
- Does not cover all medical expenses to the same degree
  - Over the counter medication not reimbursed
  - Moderately useful medications 35% only
ARRIVING TO France

- Go to your nearest CPAM office (St Germain or Marly)
- Ask for a health coverage (only one member – usually the employed – covers all others)
- Provide ID, proof of employment
- You will get a medical appointment in Paris (with OFFI)
- Receive the « CARTE VITALE »
- Your employer might propose a complementary insurance called « MUTUELLE »
ARRIVING TO France

- You contact your « médecin traitant » (family physician),
- This « médecin traitant » will sign with you a contract
- If you are above 16 years old, the only specialists that you can directly go to (make an appointment with them before !) are ophtamologists, psychiatrists, gynecologists
ARRIVING TO France : GOING TO THE GP

- Contact her/him, do not go directly to her/his practice
- Some GPs have, for urgent matters, consultation times without appointment (called « consultations libres »): check on their plate
- Be patient!
- If you do not choose a GP the french system will reimburse less
ARRIVING TO France: GOING TO THE GP

- The doctor usually gives her/his prescription, then uses electronically your Carte Vitale
- You may pay cash or cheque, sometimes bank card payment.
- 3 categories of doctors:
  - “Conventionnés groupe 1” current fee = 23 €
  - “conventionnés groupe 2” : fees varying from 23 to 80 €
  - “non conventionnés” : fees over 40
- For the two last categories, the “mutuelle” eventually covers the additionnal fee
ARRIVING TO France : GOING TO THE SPECIALIST

- It is wise to consult your general practitioner first, otherwise the french system reimburses less.
- Public hospital specialists usually require a letter from your physician.
- There is a list of English speaking physicians at the «Conseil de l’Ordre des Médecins»
  tel 01 30 80 82 82
GOING TO THE PHARMACIST
GOING TO THE PHARMACIST

- The doctor’s prescription is for ONE patient only.
- Show your prescription to the chemist.
- Pharmacists will propose systematically the generic (lower price)
- Sometimes a drug is not in stock, the pharmacist will give you a coupon for later pick up.
- Tablets are not reconditioned by the pharmacist. Do not trash the left-over pills! Bring them back to your chemist.
- Medication is significantly lower than in the US.
A PRESCRIPTION

Bénéficiaire
nom-prénom
sexe-âge
taille-poids si nécessaire

Date de la prescription

Docteur DUPONT Jacques
rue des Charmilles
59600 LILVILLE

Madame Paule DURAND
55 ans

Médecine générale
59. 1 -------

acébutolol 200 mg eps voie orale
2 cps/j pendant 1 mois
à renouveler 3 fois

SPECIALITE A
non substituable
2 cps 3 fois /j
2 btes

NR SPECIALITE B
1 cp/j pendant 1 mois

Signature manuscrite

Prescripteur
nom-prénom
adresse
qualité
n° d'identification

Dénomination commune :
- principe actif, dosage,
- forme pharmaceutique,
- voie d'administration,
- posologie,
- durée de traitement
- le cas échéant, nombre de renouvellements

Spécialité pharmaceutique :
- posologie,
- durée de traitement ou nombre de conditionnements
- le cas échéant, nombre de renouvellements.

Mention manuscrite du caractère non substituable de la spécialité :
Le médicament prescrit ne peut être substitué par une spécialité générique

Mention du caractère non remboursable (NR) de la spécialité : prescription hors indication thérapeutique remboursable
SPECIAL SITUATIONS:
AT HOSPITAL OR CLINIC

- If you have an appointment: go directly to the secretary
- If you are admitted: go to the « bureau des admissions » and you will be directed
- American hospital* at Neuilly and the British hospital at Courbevoie are the only English speaking hospital around (and not the British hospital)

* Note that this hospital is supposed to care for all US citizens whether they can pay or not)
SPECIAL SITUATIONS: EMERGENCY

- **SOS médecins:**
- **SAMU: 15** for severe or mild emergencies
- **112, 911:** please do not use
- **GP/médecin traitant:** most of them answer directly their phone calls at certain times of the day.
- **Maison Médicale de garde:**
  from 9:00 to 13:00 every Sunday or bank holiday days
- **Hospital or clinic emergencies:**
  go directly to the department
  (preferable referred by a GP)
SPECIAL SITUATIONS: GYNECOLOGIST/EXPECTING A BABY

- Some GPs do pap smears and follow-up pregnancies until month 5
- Specialists gynecologists rarely consult in emergency (unless obstetrical emergency)
- No third party attending the examination
- If you are expecting, you are supposed to consult at least on a monthly basis from the 1st month until the end of pregnancy
USEFUL CONTACTS

- SAMU: 15
- SOS MEDECINS 78 (Marly le Roi): 01 39 58 58 58
- MAISON MEDICALE DE GARDE: 1 rue de Pontoise Saint Germain en Laye 9:00 to 13:00 on bank holidays and sundays
- PHARMACY ON DUTY OUTSIDE USUAL OPENING HOURS: call the commissariat de police 01 39 10 91 00
- EMERGENCIES HOPITAL SAINT GERMAIN POISSY: 01 39 27 51 18
- EMERGENCIES HOPITAL VERSAILLES: 01 39 63 93 77
- EMERGENCIES CLINIQUE PORT MARLY: 01 39 17 24 24
- EMERGENCIES CLINIQUE PARLY 2: 01 39 63 71 15
- CPAM (from France): 3646 from Monday to Friday 8:00 to 20:00
- CPAM (from abroad): + 33 811 70 36 46
THANK YOU!

AND REMEMBER: ALWAYS HAVE YOUR CARTE VITALE AND CARTE DE MUTUELLE WITH YOU!