What medical and hyperbaric facilities are available in Belize?

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As a small and developing country, Belize has limited medical facilities when compared to large countries such as the U.S. Still, major advances have been accomplished over the years – there are now two private hospitals and the national government runs public hospitals in all major towns. Hospitals do not honor regular medical insurance, therefore travelers are recommended to consider travel medical insurance.

Medical doctors in Belize are predominantly trained in neighboring Guatemala, Mexico Cuba and Jamaica. A few been trained in the U.K. and the U.S. Many of the doctors trained in Central America have taken short courses in the U.S. to augment their training. There are a few Cuban and Indian doctors but many consider them transients who come to Belize for a short period until they can get a visa to migrate to the U.S. The medical specialist services available in Belize are:

- Obstetrics & Gynecology
- General surgery
- Pediatrics
- Orthopedic Surgery
- Neurosurgery
- Anesthesiology
- Neurology
- Radiology

In addition chiropractic, ophthalmology, orthodontics and general dentistry are widely available. Kidney dialysis services have been recently introduced. As is the case with regular medical services, dentists and ophthalmologists will not honor out of town medical insurance. We recommend purchasing travel insurance with medical coverage. Sorely lacking in Belize are good emergency centers. Cancer patients need to travel to

Guatemala, Mexico or the U.S. for treatment.

The forte of medical centers in Belize at this time appears to be diagnostic. Practically all lab tests can be done locally. The private hospitals have also invested in CAT scan equipment, ultrasound, and even spiral CAT. A local US support group operates Wings of Hope. Volunteer pilots offer emergency air ambulance service at minimal cost for those who need to seek emergency medical attention abroad.

Divers might be glad to know that there is one Hyperbaric chamber – it is located on San Pedro Ambergris Caye. Subaquatics of Belize Ltd. has treated over 325 dive injuries in Belize since it established Central America's first decompression illness medical facility in San Pedro, Ambergris Caye in 1989. It now operates hyperbaric chambers in Belize, Cancun, Cozumel and the Bahamas.

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