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## **Press Release**

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# **Thailand starts the 90-days visa exemption for GCC nationals going for medical purpose**

Starting from 5 January 2013, nationals of GCC countries; Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and the UAE, can enjoy their medical treatments in Thailand for 90 days without visa.

The Royal Thai government has implemented the new regulation to facilitate the GCC patients who need to receive longer medical treatment in Thailand, while the 30-days visa exemption for tourism purpose is still existing for GCC nationals (except Saudi nationals who can apply visa on arrival for 15-days of stay)

The new regulation also allows a patient to have not more than 3 individuals of GCC nationals (i.e. parents, children, spouse or maid), accompanying him/her to stay in Thailand for 90-days without visa. Maids or accompanying persons of other nationalities, including those of 48 countries and territories listed on 30-day visa exemption scheme, are subject to visa requirement (Non-Immigrant "O" visa)

On the other hand, nationals from 5 countries; South Korea, Argentina, Brazil, Chile, and Peru, having concluded agreement on 90-days visa exemption with Thailand, are eligible for the present scheme.

The GCC nationals who wish to be eligible for the 90-days visa exemption shall present following documents to immigration officers upon arrival in Thailand:

For the patient

- (1) An official medical appointment issued by the certified health institutions in Thailand.
- (2) Financial support documents (i.e. health insurance) issued by authorities concerned in their respective countries.

For individuals

- (1) Copy of official documents for the proof of relationship between the patient and the accompanying individuals (i.e. birth certificate, marriage certificate, house registration, I.D. card/ in case of member of family)

(2)  
Employment contract (in case of employee or maid)

(3)  
Affidavit of support form (prepared by hospitals in Thailand)

Currently, Thailand has become a popular medical tourist destination and over the years it has gained recognition and credibility for its medical tourism. In 2012, number of tourists coming to Thailand for this purpose is as high as 2,530,000 tourists, increasing from 2011 by 11.3% (2,240,000).

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