

## **Check Your Passports... NOW!**

I almost blew it, big time. Three days before we were supposed to leave to visit the Haases in their homeland and Galip in his, I realized my passport had expired oh...about three weeks prior. Holy cow, did I ever have a panic attack. I stayed up almost all night worrying and wondering how I could explain to the people who were relying on me, that I had slipped up so badly. I had meetings set up! I had important people waiting on my arrival! Ay yi yi. I sent out emails advising of my possible unavailability and I made profuse apologies in advance.

The next morning I got up at the crack of dawn and starting calling various passport expeditors all over the country and they all said the same thing: you need 4 days for an expedited passport. That wouldn't do.

That left only one course of action: to have my staff call all the patients and push them to the afternoon, and head downtown to the passport agency myself. Maybe if I threw myself at their feet and begged for mercy they would help me out.

And can you believe it, they did. My renewed passport would be ready in 24 hours. No matter that my photo probably reflects that stunned "deer in the headlights" look. I would have my passport back and be able to travel on schedule. Whew! Big sigh of relief.

I have heard so many horror stories of people waiting for their passports for weeks and months and not being able to travel because their applications are "in the hopper." All I can say is, check your passports now and make a plan to file for renewal well in advance of the expiration date. You'll be saved the sheer terror I went through this week.

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