

Tips for Keeping Healthy During Summer Travel

Written by Leslie K. Hughes

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Oh, vacation. That time you have been looking forward to for months and months, waiting your turn to hop on a plane and travel far from your worries. A few days into your perfect vacation, you wake up with the flu. What could be more frustrating than this? We at AFM do not want this to happen to you, so we have teamed up with Dr. Omur Cinar Elci, chair of St. George's University Department of Public Health and Preventative Medicine, to bring you 10 tips on how to stay healthy while traveling.

#1. CDCP WEBSITE

Take a look at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website for vaccine information and health alerts for your travel destination. Also, Dr. Elci recommends scheduling an appointment with your doctor four to six weeks prior to taking off to get any necessary medicine.

#2. EXERCISE

Get your immune system prepped for extra germ exposure by working out. Vitamins also play a big role in boosting up your immune system to prevent catching the cold of the person next to you on the plane.

#3. SLEEP

While getting enough sleep every night is important, it is especially important to sleep fully the night before you fly. Dr. Elci suggests seven to nine hours to prepare your body for traveling.

#4. PLANE SNACKS

We can't deny it – the snacks on planes are not exactly delicious or nutritious. Cookies and a shot of Jamison are not there for your health benefit. Instead, bring your own snacks such as nuts, fruits and veggies to keep you from indulging in unhealthy food that could affect your immune system.

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#5. WATER

We already have a pretty good handle on the whole water-drinking thing here in Arizona, but don't forget about that once you leave. Staying hydrated is key to staying healthy.

#6. SAY NO TO CAFFEINE AND ALCOHOL

We know, we know – you're on vacation. That's when you're supposed to be able to eat and drink whatever you want, right? Wrong. Dr. Elci stresses that you opt out of alcohol and caffeine as much as possible.

#7. DON'T TOUCH THAT SEAT BACK

Airplane seat backs are ideal breeding grounds for germs. It's best to stay away from the SkyMall magazine and shop online instead.

#8. WASH YOUR HANDS

This may seem pretty obvious, but wash your hands even more than you normally do. There are so many germs that pass through airplanes, airports and tourist areas, which mean ample opportunity for you to catch something you don't want.

#9. SPF

A tan is always nice, but feeling good while on vacation is even better. Slather on that sunscreen to stay healthy and safe.

#10. TAKE ACTION

If you return home from vacation feeling sick, pop in to see your doctor as soon as possible. You want to catch anything you may have caught in the earliest stages possible, and your doctor is the best one to help you there.

Wherever you find yourself traveling this summer, AFM hopes you have a blast and stay healthy!