

*From lost luggage to jet lag,* it doesn't take much to put a damper on a great vacation. Taking a few extra precautions before you leave home can make the difference between a good trip and a bad one.

When packing, it's especially important to consider your prescription medications. Missing a dose or not having the proper information could have serious consequences.

- Pack all of your prescription medications into your carry-on luggage. You won't miss an important dose if your checked luggage is lost.
- Pack an extra week's supply of your medications in case your travel arrangements change.
- Keep medication in the original containers. This will make it easier for customs officials to inspect and will help your doctor in the event of an emergency.
- If you take narcotic prescription drugs or travel with needles, ask your doctor to provide you with a letter explaining the

### IMPORTANT TIPS FOR AIR TRAVEL

- If you have a medical device or require oxygen, check with your doctor about any special requirements for airport security screening.
- When you book your flight, let your airline or travel agent know if you will require assistance or a wheelchair at the airport.
- Many airports will allow seniors to have a family member or companion escort them to and from their gate if they are in need of assistance. Ask your airline representative for an authorized escort pass when you check in.
- The limit of one carry-on and one personal item (purse, briefcase or computer case) does not apply to medical supplies, equipment, mobility aids, and/or assistive devices carried by and/or used by a person with a disability.
- Make sure your carry-on and medical equipment have identification tags attached.

Source: [www.tsa.gov](http://www.tsa.gov)

# Don't Take a **VACATION** from **HEALTH!**

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reason why you have those drugs and paraphernalia. This is especially helpful with customs officials.

- Some countries have regulations about the types of medicines that can be brought in. Some over-the-counter drugs may be considered a controlled substance in other countries, such as medicines containing the painkiller codeine. Contact the appropriate embassy before you travel to check whether your medication is acceptable.
- If your medicine needs to be stored and kept cool, take a small insulated container with you.
- Keep a list or record of all medications you take and the condition it treats in case you need medical attention while away. AARP's "Personal Medication Record" form is a handy way to list all the medicines and dietary supplements you take. To order, call 1-888-OUR-AARP toll-free or visit the website [www.aarp.org/usingmeds](http://www.aarp.org/usingmeds).
- Travel with your prescription script just in case your medicine gets lost or stolen and you need to replace it. Have your doctor include the brand and generic version.

Don't let jet lag get the better of you when traveling across time zones. The change in light can affect your internal body clock, sometimes causing stomach problems, insomnia and fatigue. A few simple steps will help limit these symptoms.

- When traveling from east to west, avoid the sun until the day after your arrival.
- When going west to east, take a brisk walk after you arrive.

In some countries, food and water can potentially cause health issues such as diarrhea. To avoid illness select food with care.

- In areas where hygiene and sanitation are inadequate, avoid raw foods including salads, uncooked vegetables, unpasteurized milk and milk products such as cheese.
- Only eat food that's been cooked and is still hot, or fruit that has been washed in clean water that you have peeled yourself. Avoid cooked food that has been allowed to stand for several hours at room temperature, or reheat thoroughly.
- Avoid food and beverages from street vendors.
- Only drink bottled water where water might be contaminated. This includes ice cubes. Discard ice that has come in contact with your glass and clean the glass with soap and hot water. When possible, drink directly from the can or bottle, however, water droplets on the outside of these containers may also be contaminated. Dry the containers before they are opened, especially where your mouth will come in contact.

Avoid brushing teeth with tap water in areas where water may be contaminated.

Now you're ready for a healthy vacation full of fond memories! Happy travels!

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