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The art of healthy traveling

Your practical guide to a worry-free vacation

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As alert levels have dropped and restrictions have eased up, a lot of people are eager to travel after being locked down for two years. Not to dampen anyone's spirits but it is prudent to still take precautions. Whether Covid19 is lurking out there or not, we always have to stay healthy especially when traveling. You wouldn't want to get sick in the middle of your dream vacation now, would you?

Health check

Being a healthy traveler begins before the actual trip. If you have a medical condition and haven't seen your doctor due to the pandemic, take time to schedule a health check just to ensure that you are physically fit to travel, be it domestically or a long-haul flight.

Rest and sleep

Every traveler goes through frenzy, days or even weeks before a trip. Trying to meet deadlines at work, packing, and just getting things in order before they leave. This phase often leaves them sleep-deprived and exhausted. Don't allow yourself to get into this trap. Sleep is vital in keeping your immune system and energy levels up. Make a conscious effort to rest and take that much needed snooze, especially days before you travel. You will be more productive when you are well rested. Having trouble sleeping? Try wearing a soft sleep mask to block off light and help you produce more of the sleep hormone melatonin for good quality sleep.

Be active

When packing your stuff, include comfortable walking shoes or running shoes. Exploring places while hitting more than 10,000 steps a day without hurting your feet will surely improve your blood circulation and cardiorespiratory endurance. This will help you burn calories from those treat foods that you enjoyed during the trip. Being physically active while traveling is a great way to boost your metabolism and immune system. Swim, walk, whatever it takes, just move.

Hydrate regularly

Pack an empty water bottle with you. Have it refilled during a flight to stay properly hydrated. Get your hydration from pure water or zero-calorie carbonated water instead of drinking calorie-laden beverages like soda and other concoctions that are not made of 100 percent fruit juices. One way to test your hydration level is to check the color of your urine. It must be clear or light

colored. Darkcolored urine indicates dehydration. It could suppress your immune system, as well as, affect blood pressure, blood glucose level and more.

Supplement as needed

Eating adequate amounts of fresh produce from fruits and vegetables may be challenging for some when traveling simply because they may not be readily available while in transit. Plant food sources have plant chemicals or phytochemicals, vitamins, minerals and fiber that help ward off diseases, feed the friendly bacteria in the digestive tract or the gut, and promote good bowel habits. Traveling and changes in sleep patterns alter the gut microbiome. The good bacteria found in the gut are depleted thus affecting the way we break down nutrients as well as compromises the immune system. We are all familiar with traveler's diarrhea, right? While contaminated food and water may be the main culprit, some individuals just experience loose bowel movements because of the changes in their gut microbiome.

With the guidance of your registered nutritionist dietitian, begin making your gut healthier by eating fresh fruits, vegetables and whole grains like brown rice even before you travel. You can also bring probiotic capsules and some functional foods like wheatgrass, barley, soy, mushrooms, vegetable extracts, and other plant foods in powdered form during your travel. This will ensure that you are getting nourished despite the lack of fresh produce in your diet while traveling

Remember to always prioritize your health and nutrition especially when traveling. Be a healthy traveler.

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