

# TRAVELING WITH HEALTH

## HOW TO STAY HEALTHY WHILE TRAVELING - PATRICK HEALEY, N.D.

Traveling is often stressful especially airline travel. Delays in departures, rushing to your boarding gate, crying children, sleep deprivation, TSA security, etc. Combine this with a poor diet and lifestyle, stressful job and a stuffy pressurized tube with 100 or more sneezing, coughing, generally rundown people and you have the perfect conditions to develop illness. With this in mind, here are some things you can do to decrease your chances of becoming sick and to keep your immune system operating at its best.

- 1.) **Sleep** – Try to get enough sleep on a regular and consistent basis, but especially the night or two before your travel day. This is often hard to do due to excitement and stress, but do your best. It is invaluable to your health! Sleep enhances your immune system and regenerates the cells of your body.
- 2.) **Drink plenty of water** – It is easy to get dehydrated during travel especially by airplane. You might not drink enough to avoid using the restroom. You might not like the taste of the water, but it is essential to keep your body functioning optimally. It keeps your bowels regular, flushes waste products and toxins out of your body, and keeps your energy and immune systems functioning appropriately. It's recommended for the general, healthy, population that individuals drink roughly half their body weight in ounces. For example, if you are 140lbs. then you should aim to drink about 70 ounces throughout the day. This requirement changes with activity level and climate, but it's a good guideline.
- 3.) **Movement** – Make sure to move around whenever possible, especially your lower legs. Sitting for prolonged periods of time can lead to blood pooling in the legs and feet and increases your risk of forming blood clots. Get up and stretch your legs or if you can't, move your feet, ankles, and calves while you are in your seat. The movement of your muscles helps move the blood and prevent it from becoming stagnant and pooling.
- 4.) **Nutrients** – Make sure you are eating a healthy diet full of whole foods such as vegetables, fruits, and nuts/seeds. Vitamin C found in red and green bell peppers, kiwi, citrus fruits, broccoli, and green leafy vegetables plays an important role in supporting your immune system. Selenium and zinc are minerals that are beneficial for supporting your immune system as well and your entire body for that matter. A good source of zinc can be found in pumpkin seeds and a great source of selenium can be found in 4-6 Brazil nuts.

While there are many factors that influence health and illness, following the above recommendations will go a long way in helping you stay healthy and happy during your travels.