

how are you

As summer approaches, many of us are planning our holidays. But some of us don't travel as well as others. **Virginia Muzik** investigates how to prevent and alleviate some common 'travel bugs'.

For some people, travelling can be fraught with unpleasant ailments such as jet lag, tummy upsets and motion sickness but with simple planning, and tried and true remedies, the journey can be without complication.

Naturopath, Lisa Costa Bir, advises that you need adequate rest before a trip. "Especially if you're going long distance. Make a list and get organised. A trip is meant to be fun and relaxing, so don't stress out before you leave!" she says. Prior to your journey, eat healthy food, drink plenty of water and ideally, don't drink alcohol for at least 24 hours before your departure - especially if travelling by airplane, as this can cause dehydration and worsen any motion sickness symptoms.

Motion sickness

Motion sickness can happen in any type of moving vehicle, such as a car, boat, train or plane. Symptoms include dizziness and nausea, vomiting, drowsiness, rapid breathing, headache, pallor, sweating, light-headedness, increased salivation and flushed skin. Prevention is the best treatment, as it's hard to quell the symptoms once they've hit.

Try eating a light meal around three hours before travelling, avoiding spicy and greasy foods, dairy products and foods high in protein or sodium. Avoid alcohol and smoking and get plenty of fresh air. Avoid reading or watching videos. Limit head movements and focus on a distant point, such as the horizon,

or close your eyes. Travel in the centre of a boat or airplane and sit in the front seat of car, or drive, rather than be a passenger. Stay calm too; it's thought that anxiety can exacerbate motion sickness, especially if you have experienced it before and worry about it happening again.

Taking ginger or peppermint about an hour prior to travel can help prevent the onset of motion sickness. They can also help treat motion sickness symptoms if they occur. Ginger helps relieve nausea, vomiting, indigestion and dizziness. It boosts digestive fluids and neutralises acids, making it an effective anti-nausea alternative. The Ginger People's Ginger Chews are a convenient way of benefitting from ginger's anti-nausea properties.

Peppermint also relieves indigestion and nausea. Its anti-inflammatory, anti-spasmodic properties help relax the muscles of the digestive tract and soothe the stomach. Peppermint tea is an easy way of taking peppermint. The essential oils of ginger and peppermint are also beneficial. You can inhale a few drops on a tissue or dilute in carrier oil and rub on your abdomen.

Jet lag

Jet lag is the result of air travel across several world time zones. The more time zones crossed, the greater the disruption to your body clock, leaving you out of synch with the 'real' time at your destination.

Jet lag symptoms include fatigue and sleep difficulties, loss of appetite and constipation,



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travelling?

Travel health essentials

Sunscreen (SPF 30+ is ideal) – to prevent sunburn

Aloe vera gel – to treat sunburns

Essential oils (ginger, peppermint, lavender) – to treat motion sickness and sunburn. Eucalyptus oil to help relieve blocked sinuses.

Ginger and peppermint (as tablets, chews or teas) – to treat motion sickness and digestive upsets

Rosehip oil – to keep skin hydrated

Shelf-stable probiotics – for relief from digestive upsets

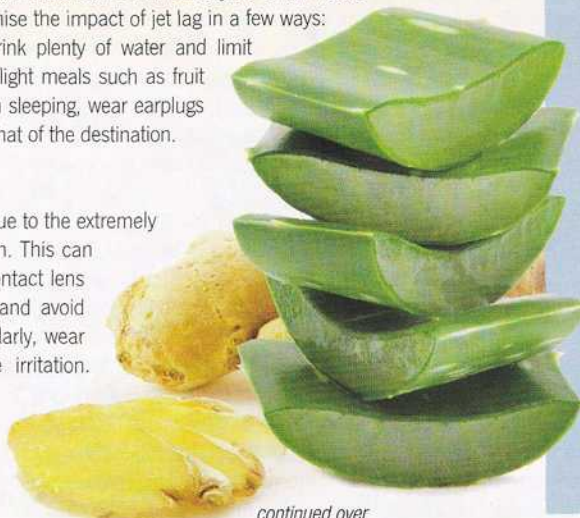
Vitamin C and zinc combo – to support the immune system

Rescue Remedy – for people who are anxious about flying.

disorientation, impaired concentration and irritability. It can take between a few days to a few weeks to adjust to the new time zone, however you can minimise the impact of jet lag in a few ways: during the flight, wear loose, comfortable clothing; drink plenty of water and limit alcohol, carbonated and caffeinated drinks; eat small, light meals such as fruit and vegetables; walk around the cabin frequently; when sleeping, wear earplugs and an eye mask and try to plan sleep as if the time is that of the destination.

Dehydration

The aircraft cabin is a very dehydrating environment, due to the extremely low humidity levels of outside air supplied to the cabin. This can cause drying of the nose, throat and eyes, irritating contact lens wearers. Make sure you increase your water intake and avoid alcohol, coffee and tea. Wet your face and eyes regularly, wear glasses instead of contact lenses to minimise eye irritation. Dehydration can take its toll on your skin too, so you'll need to stow some moisturising products like rosehip oil in your carry-on luggage to keep your skin feeling hydrated. Trilogy skincare's Trilogy Travellers kit contains five travel-sized products to refresh the skin.



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Cabin pressure

Pressurised air in the aircraft cabin can affect people who are prone to sinus congestion or allergies, causing ear and sinus pain on aircraft take-off, and especially on descent. If you fly when you have a cold or flu, swollen membranes in your nose can block your Eustachian tubes, the tiny channels between your nasal passages and middle ear, causing discomfort during changes in cabin pressure. Swallowing or yawning can help open the Eustachian tubes, equalising the pressure between your middle ear and throat. Using a saline nasal spray during flight may also provide relief by keeping the sinuses moist and allowing proper drainage.

A few drops of eucalyptus oil on a handkerchief inhaled during take-off and landing can also help to open the tubes.

DVT

Deep Vein Thrombosis (DVT) is a condition which can occur on long-haul flights where after long periods of sitting still blood can pool in the deep veins of the leg and lead to the formation of clots. This can be a fatal condition. While aside from blood-thinning medication, there are no scientifically-proven

ways to prevent DVT, there are recommended practices thought to help reduce the risk.

These include wearing compression stockings, exercising your legs during flight by walking around regularly and drinking plenty of fluids and little or no alcohol. Some Australian research suggests the gingerol compound in ginger root may have an anti-clotting effect and be a potential alternative to aspirin, but seeking a medical opinion is advised.

Constipation or diarrhoea

The bane of many a traveller is an upset digestive system, which may result in constipation, diarrhoea – or both! Drinking safe, clean water is crucial in both cases. Probiotics may be beneficial, as they restore beneficial intestinal bacteria after the balance is upset from too much holiday food. For best results, start taking probiotics before your holiday. There are some that are shelf stable and don't require refrigeration. Drinking peppermint tea can help settle your tummy, and in the case of

diarrhoea, ginger can help relieve intestinal cramps.

Sunburn

Don't forget to pack the sunscreen when on holidays, as there is nothing worse than feeling sore and sorry after a day in the sun! However if you do manage to get sunburnt, here are a few simple remedies. Aloe vera gel applied to the sunburnt areas can soothe the heat and burning sensation. Lavender essential oil, diluted in a moisturiser, or carrier oil, has a similar effect. After the initial redness has lessened, applying rosehip oil can help heal sun-damaged skin, thanks to the omega 3, 6 and 9 essential fatty acids that moisturise dry skin and its betacarotene and lycopene content, which assists in skin cell renewal and repairing sun damage. And make sure you drink lots of water. ☺

Virginia Muzik is a journalist and feature writer, voice artist and singer, based in Sydney. writenoise.com.au

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