

TIPS ON TRAVEL AND JET LAG

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Traveling is fun, exciting and adventuresome, but it can upset the circadian rhythms of your body. Traveling eastward across time zones is most difficult although traveling westward and across the equator also affects body chemistry. Even leaving your own home and bed requires adjustments. Some things you can do to help yourself through such transitions include:

- Mentally set your watch a day or so before departure to the time at your destination and start adjusting your daily routine to it. Hawaii is 4-5 hours behind Central Standard Time. Going to bed an hour earlier while in Hawaii helps keep you closer to your home time.
- Pack your own pillow with a distinctive pillowcase so you can sleep well at your destination (a distinctive pillow case helps it from getting lost).
- Give yourself plenty of time to arrive at the airport and check-in. Flying is probably now safer than ever, but the security checks can often be time consuming. Review current TSA requirements for carrying on liquids and lotions. Participate in the TSA Pre-check program to speed up and ease your journey through airport security.
- Drink plenty of clean water in flight (6 ounces per hour) and at your destination. This keeps you hydrated (including your nasal passages that pick up viruses) and forces you to get up periodically and walk. Keep a bottle of water by your airline seat to drink during the night.
- Try Afrin Extra Moisturizing nasal spray 30 minutes before and after the flight.
- Avoid alcohol or caffeine and do not eat big meals just before sleeping on the airplane. For night flights eat before departure and skip the airplane meal.
- A neck pillow, ear plugs, and darkening eye covers will help you sleep on the airplane. The pillow we like has a silk like cover, very flexible, and feels like it is filled with soft sand particles. There is also a neck ring that is easier to carry and works well. It is sold by skymall.com.
- Place the airline pillow behind the small of your back and cover your legs with the blanket.
- Walk around and stretch often when on the airplane. Wear tie shoes that can be loosened or removed during flight. Most people's feet swell a little during a long flight. If you have any circulation problems in your legs be sure to wear compression stockings.
- An aisle seat works well for getting up but a window seat allows for better sleeping. Exit row seats give the most legroom but are sometimes draftier and the seat may not recline. Sometimes the seat in front of exit rows and the very last row of seats do not recline. For domestic flights you can check for a good seat at www.seatguru.com.
- If possible print your boarding pass online the day before your departure. Both Hyatt hotels offer free printing of your boarding passes for the flight home.
- During layovers of two or more hours you may want to take a free shuttle to the nearest hotel. They have more comfortable lounges to rest and nice restaurants.
- Some people like to take a sleeping pill just prior to departure on overnight flights. Some people use Ambian 5 or 10mg. The CR version is unpredictable.
- Stay current with changing airline and security regulations. Today this means packing your bags differently, overweight charges, and avoiding certain objects in your carryon. Official carry-on size is being enforced more now. If you have to pack so much that your bag is overweight it is cheaper to pay for a second piece of luggage.
- There are several homeopathic remedies sold for jet lag and travel wellness.
- There are now some daytime flights returning from Hawaii. This can be combined with an overnight on the West Coast for flights to the Midwest and East Coast.
- Taking a bath, lying in a pool, or getting a massage are also good ways to help your body adjust.
- Plan that it will take one day per hour to fully adjust to your local time.