

Are we there yet?

Summer is just around the corner so it's time to start making family holiday travel plans! Here are some suggestions to ensure your family remains healthy and happy while on holiday, wherever you are in the world!

by LIDIA KEMENY



Test your travel savvy

On which continent are you the least likely to get a case of traveller's diarrhea?

- Africa Asia
 Australia South America

Australia
 WHY : North America, Canada and Europe are also low-risk continents.

When travelling to a warm or sunny weather destination, you should always use a sunscreen with a minimum SPF of:

- 15 30 8 4

SPF 15
 WHY : The Canadian Cancer Society recommends at least 15. Of course, the higher the SPF, the higher the protection.

The most common cause of health problems while travelling is:

- Food poisoning Bug bites
 Allergies Contaminated Water

Contaminated water
 WHY : You should always have bottled water on hand when visiting developing countries, even for things as seemingly harmless as brushing your teeth.

As a general rule of thumb, it will take you how long to recover from jet lag?

- Three days
 One day for every hour of time difference
 12 hours
 One hour for every hour in flight

One day for every hour of time difference
 WHY : You can decrease your jet-lag time by staying hydrated and getting plenty of sleep on your flight.

Most airlines require a pregnant woman to have a note from her doctor to fly:

- In her ninth month Anytime
 After her fifth month Never

In her ninth month
 WHY : It's generally considered safe for a healthy pregnant woman to fly through her eighth month.

The best insect repellent to use when travelling is:

- One that smells good
 A product containing DEET
 Botanical products
 A repellent that includes sunscreen

A product containing DEET
 WHY : Repellents that contain sunscreens are not recommended because of the need to reapply sunscreen more frequently. Botanical products provide relatively limited or no protection. Check with your doctor about the recommended concentration of DEET for your baby or child.



Travel allows families to connect in ways not always possible at home, where busy daily routines dominate our lives. Including children on a trip can be a great way to build family memories and learn about other parts of the world. By taking a few precautions and understanding the risks your child may face with illness and injury, you can ensure your whole family will have a great vacation.

BE PREPARED!

Each year, thousands of families pack their bags and leave their homes for a travel adventure. At the same time, studies of family travel have shown that children can become ill while travelling. The most common reported health problems are gastrointestinal illnesses, malaria, and motor vehicle and water-related injuries.

It is especially important to make sure that all childhood vaccinations are up to date as some countries may have outbreaks of illnesses unheard of in Canada.

Make copies of all important documents and attach them to an e-mail that you can access from anywhere. In case of emergency, being able to access this information can be a big help.

GETTING TO YOUR DESTINATION

Children should travel in an approved child safety seat in both cars and airplanes. Vehicle-related injuries are the leading cause of death among children who travel. If your child is under 18 kilograms, make sure to bring a child safety seat with you as availability of well-maintained seats may be limited or non-existent.

When flying, arrange your seating in

advance as securing seats in the bulkhead area of an airplane will ensure that your baby will have more room to sleep, play and stand.

If you are anticipating a long drive, cruise or flight, plan as if your child will experience travel sickness. This means a change of clothing, bags and medication. Being prepared for this will make the process much easier to deal with if it happens.

Pack toys and activities that you can distribute throughout the trip – do not give out all the toys at once.

When flying, it's fairly common for children to experience ear pain during a descent. To help reduce the discomfort, encourage infants to nurse or suck on a bottle. Older children can chew gum to reduce some of the symptoms.

TRAVELLING WITH A CHILD WITH A MEDICAL CONDITION

If your child is diabetic, has serious allergies, or other special medical needs, planning is a necessity. Ask your physician to draft a letter, describing the medical condition and any prescription medications, including the generic name of the prescribed drugs. This is especially important if the needed medication is not sold under its brand name abroad.

Remember, that not all medicines you'll want to bring may be



legal overseas. Some places may prohibit hypodermic needles a diabetic needs to travel with. Your best approach would be to contact a travel clinic or the destination country's embassy under Customs Information.

Make sure to pack all necessary medicines in your carry-on luggage, so that they will be available if your checked luggage gets lost. If you have any health concerns, discuss your family's travel health requirements with your doctor or travel health professional.

And have a healthy and safe vacation!



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For more information about health and safety issues when travelling, please visit:

- www.cdc.gov/travel
 www.safecanada.ca
 www.travelwithyourkids.com
 www.istm.org