

## **TRAVELING IN GOOD HEALTH**

The articles in this selection were prepared to help you feel your best during the tour.

### **GENERAL**

One good rule of thumb is to eat right and light. With foods being different, a heavy meal could easily leave you with a stomachache. Even if you are accustomed to eating heavily, please take this precaution. Make sure your diet is well balanced, eating plenty of fruits and vegetables.

Whenever traveling outside the U.S., it is advisable to take precautions against intestinal disorders. You may wish to consult with your physician regarding such medications as Lomotil, Diodoquin, or deodorized incture of opium (all prescription drugs) if you are especially susceptible. Your doctor will give you more detailed information. Because we will be traveling into Egypt there is a fairly good chance a few of us will get a case of "Pharaohs' Revenge" (Diarrhea). I **STRONGLY** recommend that you get a strong medication as well as a good amount of Immodium AD. I don't think you'll regret having it!

A broad-spectrum antibiotic is recommended while traveling (Keflex, etc.). Aspirin and other headache remedies, antacid tablets, lip balm, motion sickness pills and elastic bandages are all useful items to have keep in your carry-on.

Don't forget any special prescriptions that you will need, and bring along a spare pair of glasses (if you have one) and your eyeglass prescription as well.

### **Direction of Flight Affects Jet Lag**

In recent survey, the Upjohn Company found that the direction one travels can affect the severity of jet lag. Those traveling from west to east are more likely to suffer severe jet lag. Thus, it is hard for Californians to adapt quickly when visiting an eastern U.S. city than for an Easterner to get in step with schedules on the West Coast. Likewise, more travelers going east from the Orient to California experiences more severe jet lag than those going west from California to the Orient.

Why does the direction matter? Scientists have discovered that the body has a biological tendency to operate on a 25-hour cycle instead of the 24-hour day. That is, the bodily mechanisms that govern regular daily fluctuations in temperature, hormone secretion, heart activity, appetite, sleepiness, and energy levels tend to repeat every 25 hours. We readjust the biological clock each day- and keep in harmony with a 24-hour day – by going to sleep and waking up a touch earlier than the body is disposed to. The natural urge to gravitate to a longer day may make it easier to travel to the west, which extends the length of the day. However, this effect of direction fades when very long distances are traveled.

## How People Cope

Listed below is advice offered by sleep experts. These measures may help to reduce the effects of jet lag.

- Allow plenty of time to sleep and rest in your new location in order to compensate for reduced sleep quality and make the adjustment period easier. (We will try on this one).
- Adopt local time and routines immediately upon arrival. For a stay of only one or two days, however, consider trying to maintain your home schedule, if possible.
- Take walks outdoors on the first days after arrivals to be exposed to morning or afternoon sunlight. This may help you to “reset” your “biological clocks” to function in the new environment. After flying from west to east, expose yourself to the bright light in the morning to advance your daily body rhythms, thus preparing your body to accept an earlier bedtime. Bright light exposure in the afternoon appears to delay bodily rhythms so that the need to sleep comes later, therefore, you should seek exposure to the late afternoon sun after traveling to the west.
- Consult your physician about using a short-acting sleep medication to help you adjust to the new environment. (?) Such medications should not be used in conjunction with drugs which may induce drowsiness such as antihistamines. In addition, they should not be used on the plane, but to improve sleep at bedtime upon arrival. (Be very careful if you are considering this.)

Other possible valuable steps include:

- Try to pre-adapt before departure by gradually shifting meal and sleep times to fit the new time zone.
- Before flights, avoid overeating, and drink water and juices on the plane.
- To minimize fatigue, avoid cramped positions on the plane, take regular walks in the aisles, and exercise as space permits.

Each person will learn which remedies serve his or her special needs. But it is most valuable to know that there are ways to help old-fashioned bodies keep up with the jet age.

*Sources: Jet Lag – Adapted from information published as a public service by the Up John Company.*