

UNIVERSITY OF DELAWARE STUDENT HEALTH SERVICES
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GENERAL TIPS

- Drink adequate fluids, limited or no alcohol
- Add extra dietary salt if high heat/humidity area
- Get adequate rest
- The humidity on planes is very low. Take a large bottle of water on the plane, use saline nasal spray, saline eye drops; don't wear contacts, and no caffeine.
- Long flights increase risk of thrombosis (blood clot) because of limited motion and long periods of sitting in cramped quarters. Be sure to move around frequently, exercise legs at seat, drink extra fluids and wear loose clothing. Increased risk if smoker, on birth control, drink alcohol or are overweight.
- If traveling to a country with poor sanitation: Do not wear contacts because you are unable to wash your hands adequately in clean safe water. Conjunctivitis can result.

- **JET LAG** - Circadian (biological) clock misalignment - The more time zones crossed the greater the symptoms.

SYMPTOMS:

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| • Headache | • Daytime sleepiness |
| • Irritability | • Decreased quality of sleep |
| • Upset Stomach | • Insomnia |
| • Inability to concentrate | • Loss of appetite |
| • Diminished physical performance | • Constipation |
| | • Depression |

Symptoms are usually more severe after eastward travel

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR RE-SYNCHRONIZING SLEEP PATTERNS AFTER TRAVEL

Shift daily activities to correspond to the time zone of the destination country as soon as possible.

AFTER WESTWARD FLIGHT

- Stay awake during daylight
- Go to bed as soon as it gets dark
- Eat modestly at the times that correspond to usual mealtimes
- Take comfortable, usual exercise

AFTER EASTWARD FLIGHT

- Stay awake, but avoid bright light in the morning
- Get outside in the sunlight as much as possible in the afternoon
- Eat modestly at the times that correspond to usual mealtimes
- Take comfortable, usual exercise

Staying well hydrated, avoiding alcohol and maintaining an adequate diet will help symptoms as well.

Melatonin 0.5-5mg (available at grocery, drug and health food stores) Started on first night of travel and continued for 1-5 days after arrival. Helps in falling asleep. Effect will last around 4 hours with minimal side effects.

On the Plane: Melatonin 5-8 mg , watch a boring movie or read a boring book.

Water Safety

- Don't dive in unfamiliar waters.
- Salt water has biting/stinging fish, coral and jellyfish.
- In certain countries, avoid freshwater lakes, rivers and mouths of streams due to risk of parasitic infections and giardia.
- Stay away from unprotected and untreated water bodies.
- Wear protective boots when fording streams or fishing in the ocean.
- Contaminated water can enter thru the eyes, ears or skin. Intestinal infections increase when the head is submerged and mouth and eyes are open (giardiasis).
- Water can be contaminated from urine, from infected animals or infested with snails or contaminated with feces (animal, sewage).
- Never swim in areas marked unsafe for swimming.
- **Do Not Walk in Bare feet.** Proper footwear can protect the traveler from injury (cuts, snake bites, puncture wounds and fungal infections), insects which live on or near the ground (sand fleas, ticks), poisonous plants and animals, and parasites (hookworms, strongyloides and schistosomiasis), which are found in the sand and soil. Bugs that live on or near the ground will attack. Worm and parasites burrow thru the skin if you are on infected ground.
- When laying or sitting, always have a ground covering (i.e. towel). The safest sand is below the tide line since it is 'washed' twice a day.

