

Live Healthy

NEWS



## BON VOYAGE!

Attention, fliers: There's no reason to get tripped up by common travel troubles. Spend more time sightseeing by employing these expert strategies.

**WARD OFF GI WOES** At least four weeks before you leave for vacation, begin upping your intake of probiotics, the beneficial bacteria that help maintain a healthy GI tract, either by eating a cup of yogurt every day or taking a daily supplement, says Dustin James, M.D., a gastroenterologist in St. Louis and author of *The Complete Idiot's Guide to Digestive Health*. "They'll help protect you from bugs, such as E. coli."

To steer clear of constipation, you'll also want to add a little more fiber to

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your diet (think veggies and whole grains) about seven days preflight. If traveler's diarrhea is a common complaint at your destination (perhaps Mexico or Africa), let Montezuma take his revenge out on someone else: Ask your doctor for a prescription for Xifaxan, an antibiotic that's FDA-approved specifically for this malady. And no matter where you're headed, it's always smart to fill your carry-on with a few stomach soothers, such as fiber capsules for constipation and Tums for heartburn. Essential peppermint oil (add a drop or two to a glass of water) is useful for relieving bloating and discomfort, or try a medicinal-grade lozenge such as Tummy Drops (\$14; amazon.com). In a pinch, original Altoids can ease indigestion too, says James.

**BAG JET LAG** It's not necessary to acclimate to a new time zone completely, but **adjusting your bedtime two or three nights before your adventure can help fight that foggy feeling,** says Russell Rosenberg, Ph.D.,

personal pillow from home or asking your doctor about using an OTC or prescription sleep aid. Research shows that tart cherries (in dried or juice form), which boost the body's level of the hormone melatonin, can help you sleep more

**A little cardio or strength training the day of travel—or even stretching in the security line—can get your blood flowing and help keep you loose.** “Just don't try a brand-new routine within a few days of flying,” cautions Marianne Ryan, an NYC-based physical therapist and a spokesperson for the American Physical Therapy Media Corps: “It can increase lactic acid buildup and lead to sore muscles.”

While you're in transit, use inflatable pillows to support your lower back and neck, and roll your shoulders periodically. To lower the risk of blood clots, rotate your ankles every hour or so, walk around often, and try not to cross your legs. Once you're on the ground, see if you can snag a mini-massage (most airports offer them). Then just grab your guidebook and go! —LAUREL LEICHT

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chairman of the National Sleep Foundation. If you're going from the United States to Europe, for instance, hit the sack a few hours earlier. Westward-bound? Try to stay up a little later.

If you tend to toss and turn at night, consider packing a

soundly. At the very least, request a room away from loud streets, elevators, and even the noisy ice machine.

**LIMBER UP** Exploring a new place won't be nearly as fun if you're feeling stiff and achy from the flight.



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