



NATIONAL HEADACHE FOUNDATION

428 W St James Pl, 2nd Floor, Chicago, IL 60614-2750

Toll Free (888) NHF-5552 Fax (773) 525-7357

Web Site Address: www.headaches.org

TRAVEL TIPS FOR THE HEADACHE SUFFERER

If the lure of Bali beckons as an exotic vacationland or a business meeting takes you cross-country, here are some helpful tips to ensure that you are well prepared for your trip. The National Headache Foundation offers this sound advice for travelers.

- **Medication:** Be sure to take enough to last approximately double the time period you will be away. Place medication in containers in separate travel bags to allow for spoilage or loss. If you are taking liquid medication, be sure it is placed in a leak proof plastic container.
- **Food:** If there are certain foods that you know will precipitate an attack, have the list written up and refer to it throughout your trip. Many times when eating out there is a tendency to overlook or not recognize the ingredients. If you are on a special diet, notify the hotel, tour operator or airline in advance. You will be surprised how accommodating they will be with special meals. If traveling overseas it would be well to review a guide on foods, etc for the language and to consult with the local consulate for that country if there are special foods that you need to avoid but are unable to find them in the food guides.
- **Prescriptions:** Be sure to have your physician provide you with an extra prescription and also the generic or chemical name for the drug. Also, have your health insurance company name; address and phone number on hand, the name of a person to notify in case of an emergency, blood type and a list of drug allergies. If you have a medical alert card, be sure to carry it at all times.
- **Physicians:** A short medical report from your physician describing your illness and your mode of treatment. This is essential so that if you have a relapse and need medical attention, the attending physician has a point of reference.
- It is important to plan your travel headache emergency kit well in advance. Discuss this with your physician; s/he may want to give you a health check-up prior to your trip. You may need certain shots and preventive medicines, depending upon the area to which you will be traveling.
- If you are flying long distances, ask your doctor about your dosage schedule. Should it be adjusted for high altitudes, lack of activity, different time zones and different climates.
- Many headache sufferers also are allergy sufferers and there are potential problems with the weather, seasonal changes, pollen and vegetation. Do some research on the areas you will be visiting and discuss this with your physician.
- **Foreign travel presents different problems:**
 - (a) Be sure your medication is well identified for custom clearance. Do not store your medications in anything other than their labeled bottle. All those funny pills in unmarked containers arouse suspicions.
 - (b) Perhaps you can jot down and learn a few phrases in the local language for the police or physician, if you need help.
 - (c) Plan for medical help abroad. There is an organization that can supply a list of English speaking physicians overseas. It is:

IAMAT
417 Center Street
Lewiston, NY 14092
(716) 754-4883
www.iamat.org
 - (d) **Medical insurance:** Medical assistance overseas can be very expensive. Check your personal medical health policy to see if you are covered for overseas travel. If not, there are many travel health insurance policies available, which can be purchased through your travel agent.
 - (e) If all else fails, you can call the U S Embassy or Consulate and ask for their recommendations and assistance.

With a little advance planning and by following these suggestions, you should enjoy a pleasant and headache-free trip.

