



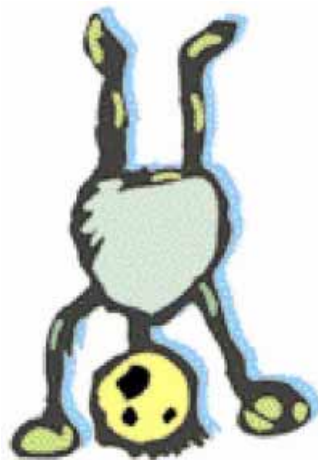
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Essential Travel Tips



Travelling with Kids

some health facts...

Children have greater risk of being exposed to contagious childhood diseases while travelling. Keep routine childhood immunisations up to date, e.g. diphtheria, tetanus, polio, mumps, measles & rubella.

Vaccines like yellow fever, typhoid, Japanese B encephalitis and rabies may be required by the country to which you are travelling. They may be safely given to children aged 9 months or older. Meningococcal vaccine is necessary for children over 3 months travelling to epidemic areas. Children one year and older should receive the paediatric formulation of hepatitis A vaccine.

Children are less concerned with personal cleanliness, food handling and sanitation than adults. This makes them more likely to develop traveller's diarrhoea.

Children may be more interested in coming into contact with animals that may be carrying fleas or ticks that can spread infection. Special precautions including preventive medications can be taken to protect children from mosquito borne infection such as malaria.

Jet lag, motion sickness and home sickness can also spoil the fun of travelling for them.

getting ready to go...

Start with a clean bill of health

Preparing children for international travel should start no later than 8 weeks before departure. Visit your doctor who will advise you on any immunisation requirements and any recent disease outbreak. Prevention of malaria is problematic because many of the medications cannot be used in young children. Drugs to prevent malaria should begin 1 week before travel and continue throughout the trip till 4 weeks after returning.

Keep to a routine schedule

Plan travel to coincide with children's normal sleeping time. This causes less disruption and irritability.

Confirm air travel arrangements

Specific seating requests e.g. nonsmoking areas and bulkhead seats where there is more room for children can make your flight more comfortable. You can also request meal substitutions like hamburgers. Many airlines make sky cots available for infant safety.

Bring along necessities

Always bring the milk bottle and nipples your baby is familiar with. Powdered formula that can mixed with bottled water is usually the safest and most convenient. Pack a good supply of disposable diapers. Remember to pack a favourite toy or game to keep your child occupied during long journeys.

ear pain...

Tips to relieve ear pain during takeoff and landing:

- Offer a bottle, pacifier or for older children, a lollipop to encourage swallowing to open the passage inside the ears to equalise the pressure.
- Avoid full meals 2 hours before travelling. Try not to offer food in transit.
- Discourage reading and colouring. Travel games and looking out the window are better diversions.
- If your child is prone to motion sickness, ask your doctor about preventive medications.

when you arrive...

Children are at no more risk of getting sick when travelling than they are at home. The potential for disease is everywhere.

Traveller's diarrhoea

Dehydration is the greatest risk from traveller's diarrhoea and is especially dangerous for infants up to 2 years of age. To prevent traveller's diarrhoea:

- Eat only well-cooked food
- Avoid high-risk foods such as salads and seafood
- Assume that all local water supplies and ice are unsafe to consume or even use when brushing your teeth
- Make sure all milk products have been boiled and pasteurized

Mild to moderate traveller's diarrhoea can be treated with fluid replacement therapy and easily digested food such as rice and dry toast or crackers. Special oral rehydration solutions can be used to prevent dehydration in infants. Seek immediate medical attention if the child has bloody diarrhoea, a fever over 38°C, persistent vomiting or shows signs of dehydration such as sunken eyes, no tears, reduced or no urination and severe weight loss.

Vector borne disease

Children are at high risk of getting malaria simply because they are less concerned about protection and more often exposed to mosquito bites. Symptoms of malaria include fever, muscle pain, headache, fatigue, chills and sweats. Personal protective measures such as loose fully-covered clothing, netting and staying indoors from dusk till dawn should be emphasized. Swimming or standing in fresh water lakes should be avoided. The risk of schistosomiasis caused by fresh water snails exist in certain countries.

Safety precautions

Accidents pose the greatest danger to most travellers especially to children. Do not walk barefooted, avoid wild animals, wear seat belts when travelling in planes and motor vehicles and use sunblock in the tropics.

Have A Safe & Happy Trip !