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Top tips for safe, healthy trips

Before you go

If you're planning an overseas trip, ask your doctor or a travel health clinic what vaccines you need. And ask early, since some vaccines take time to be effective.

Common vaccines include:

- Hepatitis
- Measles
- Tetanus and polio
- Yellow fever

Many health benefits plans don't cover travel vaccines. So check yours before you get one.

On your way

If you're flying across several time zones, here's an easy way to beat jet lag before you go:

If you're traveling *east*, try going to bed earlier at night. If you're traveling *west*, try staying up later.

For healthier flights:

- Choose a daytime flight to avoid feeling groggy
- Skip dehydrators like alcohol and caffeine
- Drink lots of water
- Avoid heavy food

Get airsick? Ask your doctor about remedies, and keep them on hand.

After you arrive

Diarrhea is the most common conundrum for world travelers. Contaminated food or water is usually to blame.

To protect yourself:

- Drink only bottled water or soft drinks (skip the ice)
- Avoid undercooked meat or fish
- Boil water for at least three minutes before drinking

It's also a good idea to avoid food from street carts and vendors — no matter how tempting.

Safe travel on the ground

Wherever you travel, these road rules can help you stay safe.

Do:

- Ride only in taxis that have seat belts (and use them)
- Place all younger children in car seats
- Ask your hotel about using public transportation

Don't:

- Drink and drive
- Drive at night, especially between cities
- Ride or rent motorcycles or scooters

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