

your **wellbeing**

Make your holiday go without a hitch



This month:

Healthy holidays

Happy holidays are healthy ones! Just a little pre-holiday preparation will make sure your trip goes without a hitch. Here are our top tips for having a healthy, happy and worry-free break.

For more information and to find out what else you can expect during 2018, visit bupa.co.uk/your-wellbeing



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Make your holiday go without a hitch



Going on holiday isn't just fulfilling and enjoyable – it can also benefit your health. Everyone needs some time to rest, relax and recharge their batteries. And however much you enjoy your job, having a change of scenery and a chance to unwind can help you avoid stress and burnout. Not to mention that making time for the people you love is very important for your mental wellbeing.

By doing some simple preparations, you can maximise your chances of staying safe and well. Read on for our top tips.



Before you go



Get any health advice and vaccinations you need

When you travel to certain countries, you might need vaccinations to protect you against infectious diseases. You probably won't need to worry about this for the United States, Western Europe, and most parts of Australia or New Zealand. But do check well before you go. You could use the Travel Health Pro (travelhealthpro.org.uk) website to do this. Here, you can also find advice on malaria tablets, local food and even the safety of drinking water in the country you're travelling to. Travel clinics can give you advice about these things too.

If you need vaccinations or a supply of your normal medicines, try to make sure you see your GP or go to a travel clinic at least a month or two before setting off.



Arrange travel insurance

Hopefully you'll enjoy a care-free, healthy holiday. But if you should need medical treatment while you're away, having the right travel insurance can relieve a lot of stress, not to mention saving your bank balance.

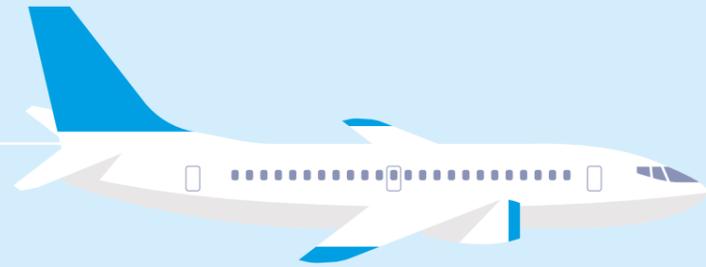
Make sure you check exactly what a travel insurance policy covers before you buy it. Some people have travel insurance included with their bank account, so it might be worth checking that before buying travel insurance.

Boost your immune system

The last thing you want is to feel ill on holiday. Why not reduce your chances of this happening by keeping healthy in the weeks before you go? There's no simple way to boost your immune system, which protects your body from illness, but the following could all make a difference.

- Eat plenty of fresh fruit and vegetables.
- Exercise regularly.
- Get out into the fresh air and sunshine.
- Make time to de-stress, relax and get enough sleep.

On the way



Avoid travel sickness

Travel sickness (also called motion sickness) is caused by repeated movements. It might happen if you're travelling by boat or by car.

You can buy over-the-counter medicines that can help prevent travel sickness. These include hyoscine tablets or skin patches, and antihistamine tablets. Your pharmacist can tell you about the different options available.

Here are some self-help tips that could help if you're prone to travel sickness.

- Focus on controlling your breathing. Try to breathe at a regular, controlled pace – not in time with the motion of the vehicle. If you feel sick (nauseous), slow, deep breathing may help.
- Get some fresh air if you can.
- Keep your eyes on the horizon and try to move your head as little as possible.

Be mindful of DVT

Sitting down for hours on a long-distance flight? You may be at increased risk of developing deep vein thrombosis (DVT). This is where a blood clot forms deep in a vein, causing pain and swelling. It usually happens in one of your legs.

You can reduce your chances of DVT during a long journey by doing the following.

- Get up and walk around whenever you can.
- Do leg exercises in your seat, for example, bend and straighten your knees, feet and toes every half an hour.
- Wear compression stockings to help your circulation.
- Drink plenty of fluid so you don't become dehydrated and avoid alcohol.



Once you arrive



Beat the jet lag

The dreaded jet lag can make you feel groggy for a good few days if you've had a long flight. It tends to be a bigger problem when you fly east.

To beat jet lag, try the following.

- Stay hydrated by drinking plenty of water, and avoid too much caffeine or alcohol.
- Adjust to your new time zone as soon as you arrive. If you arrive at your hotel in the afternoon, for example, get out into the daylight and try to stay awake until the evening.
- Do some light exercise when you arrive, even if it just means going for a walk.

Stay sun safe

Sunburn won't just make you feel sore and uncomfortable – it can also increase your risk of skin cancer. Fortunately, staying safe is pretty easy to do. It's not about avoiding the sun altogether, as sunlight gives you vitamin D, which is really important for your health. But just be careful to get the balance right and follow these tips.

- Have the sunscreen ready if you're holidaying in warmer climates. Use one with a sun protection factor (SPF) of at least 15, but ideally 30 or over – especially for children.
- Apply sunscreen about half an hour before you go in the sun.
- Re-apply every two hours (more often for children) or after swimming. Remember, you can still burn in water and on cloudy days!
- Stay in the shade as much as possible between 11am and 3pm, when the sun is at its hottest.
- Try to cover up with loose clothes. Wide-brimmed hats can be particularly helpful.

Eat well

Fortunately, some of the most cherished holiday food around the world is really good for you! Think Mediterranean salad, vegetable tagine, grilled fish or tropical fruits. Try to enjoy a variety of healthy cuisine while easing off more fatty foods.

Fit in some exercise

This shouldn't be difficult, because most of us pack in loads of exercise on holiday without even thinking about it. From walking long distances while sightseeing, to going for a swim or climbing up steps to a view point, feel good about yourself as you accidentally fit in some workouts! Be sure to carry a bottle of water with you when you do, especially if the weather is hot.

Relax

A huge part of going away is taking time to relax. So switch off from your work emails, leave your stresses behind and try to be mindful of the present moment. It might take some time to unwind at first if things have been non-stop back home, but over the course of your time away, you should find yourself easing into the holiday vibe.

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