

FAMILY CIRCLE & SESAME STREET MAGAZINE PRESENT



families on the go



Photo by Sesame Place

CALL OF THE WILD ● THE WEEKEND VACATION ● MAPPING IT OUT
TUMMY TROUBLES...EMERGENCIES...SUNBURN

families on the go

tummy troubles... emergencies... sunburn

and other health problems to prevent or avoid



it would be wonderful to tell you that your entire family will be happy and healthy your entire trip... and we do hope that will be the case. However, vacations can also create hidden stresses on your body. Long hours in the car, strange surroundings, unknown foods, a change in routine—all take a toll on your health and well-being. Fortunately a little common sense and preventive planning will help insure a healthy trip.

Get to an emergency room if any family member has:

- a persistent high temperature (over 102°);
- breathing difficulties;
- extremely severe headache;
- long-lasting nausea, vomiting and/or diarrhea;
- severe internal pain;
- muscle weakness.

On the Road

Break up your travel days whenever possible and get everyone out of the car every few hours to stretch their legs. Car and motion sickness are justified concerns. Dr. Bradley Connor, medical director of Travel Health Services in New York City, recommends Dramamine. In a car or on board ship, seat people prone to motion sickness near open windows. Have them avoid reading and focus their attention outside.

To avoid burns, all seats (especially the metal on seat belts and car seats) should be protected from direct sun.

Common Ailments

Decent nutrition and exercise are crucial to healthy travel. Dr. Connor suggests that you eat frequent, smaller meals of

complex carbohydrates throughout the day.

Constipation during a vacation may be caused by a lack of fluids and lots of sedentary hours. Combat it by starting the day with a high-fiber breakfast—cereal, bread, fruit and juice.

Traveler's diarrhea (TD), one of the commonest ailments to affect travelers, is most often the result of new strains of bacteria encountered in local food, drinking or swimming water, even airborne dust particles. TD rarely lasts more than 48 hours, but it is most important that you replace lost liquids. For adults, the Centers for Disease Control recommends alternating two 8-ounce drinks: one of potassium-rich fruit juice, such as orange or apple, laced with 1½ teaspoons honey or corn syrup and a pinch of salt; the other with carbonated water or plain boiled water plus ½ teaspoon baking soda. Premade formulas for babies and children, like Pedialyte, are sold in drugstores and supermarkets.

Protect skin—especially infants' and children's—from sun exposure. A few bad sunburns during childhood may set the stage for skin cancer later. (But don't apply sunscreen to infants younger than 6 months.)

First-Aid Kit

(Pictured above, left) Include: bandages, gauze and adhesive tape, child- and adult-strength acetaminophen, syrup of ipecac (for poisoning; contact Poison Control Center before administering), thermometer, motion-sickness medication recommended by pediatrician, sunscreen (do not use on infants) plus protection for lips, insect repellent, antibacterial cream or ointment, rubbing alcohol, antihistamine for allergic reactions, nasal aspirator, scissors, tweezers, needle and thread, matches, flashlight, disposable wipes. Also pack any prescription or over-the-counter medications family members take regularly.

Insurance

Remember to take your health-insurance identification card and phone number with you as well as your auto-insurance policy and phone number.

Chances are if you get enough rest, exercise caution and don't push yourselves, your entire crew will remain healthy. Relax and enjoy!

Michelle Zoda