

## Enjoying Air Travel

Visiting faraway places and exploring exotic lands is one of life's greatest pleasures. Traveling is an exiting and relaxing experience, and the very thought of taking a vacation can make your heart beat faster. Travel can also be a tiring experience, particularly for those who travel for business rather than pleasure.

People use air travel for different reasons. Some are conducting business transactions, some are visiting friends and relatives, and others are embarking on a grand adventure. Traveling to explore new places, take in new sceneries and meet new people opens a new world of possibilities and recharges our entire physical being.

In the past, travel was restricted to chariots, carriages, and beasts of burden like horses and camels. Boats and ships have carried centuries of travelers along rivers, across lakes and to foreign lands. The invention of the train brought about a new way to travel quickly from coast to coast across entire continents. Land transportation was revolutionized as automobiles began to appear.

Above all other methods of transportation, air travel is preferred by most. Traveling by air is easier and more convenient than land and sea transportation. There is certainly no faster way to get to your destination. It's possible to arrive at a city one thousand miles away, while sitting and relaxing for a couple of hours on an airplane. Without question, air travel is the most expensive option. To most travelers however, the benefits and convenience far outweighs the added cost.

Most people have no problems traveling by air, but it is important to follow certain safeguards to stay secure and comfortable. Remember these air travel tips on your next vacation:

- \* Keep an ample supply of all medications in your carry-on luggage, and take extra amounts in case your return trip is delayed. Be sure to carry medications in bottles with their original labels. Ask your doctor whether you should alter your dosage to accommodate changes to your eating and sleeping times.
- \* If you have diabetes, epilepsy or any other conditions that may require immediate medical attention, be sure to wear a medical alert bracelet or carry an identification card. Keep your doctor's name and phone number with you in case of emergency. Remember to bring along the names and dosage amounts of all medications.
- \* Should your doctor instruct you to take oxygen when you travel on an airplane, tell the booking agent about your requirement well in advance of your flight. The airline will make arrangements and may provide the oxygen at no charge.
- \* The atmosphere in airplanes tends to be dry, and it is possible to become dehydrated over lengthy flights. Avoid alcoholic beverages and drink plenty of water.
- \* Healthy people can develop blood clots in their legs after long trips by air. Try to get up and walk around every now and then during the flight. Stretching your calf muscles, drinking water and wearing support stockings can also help to alleviate this problem.
- \* If the change in air pressure causes ear pain when you travel by air, take a decongestant before you get on the plane. You can also chew gum, and try swallowing often. Babies should be given bottles or pacifiers to suck on during the flight.
- \* Drastic changes in pressure can be dangerous, and flying immediately after scuba diving poses a serious hazard. After diving, you must wait twelve to twenty-four hours before you can safely fly. Ask your doctor or diving instructor for guidelines about flying after scuba diving.

Air travel is a wonderful experience that opens us to great adventures. With every method of travel, however, there are risks involved. Be aware of the concerns, and take a few steps to ensure a safe, happy trip. Enjoy your flight!