

# Go Now

**TRAVEL : HEALTH**

**Get the best from your long-awaited vacation. Just follow a few expert tips and have fun!**

**L**ooking forward to that well-earned break this year? Naturally, you don't want anything to go wrong during the trip. And yet, sometimes even the best laid-out plans can go awry. And we're not talking of preparations like tickets, hotel deals or sightseeing tours getting into a jumble. It could be something as simple as your fit body giving trouble just as you're setting out on that fun vacation. The best thing would be to prepare for and maintain your health before and during the holiday. So look after yourself extra carefully a month before you start out.

Some expert suggestions to make sure that your vacation doesn't end in disaster:

- First things first. Take plenty of rest before your trip begins and do all your packing well in advance – barring just that last minute bag – so that your energy levels don't droop just as you board your flight. Pack your personal first aid box for an emergency. And as experts advise, drink plenty

**STAY FIT**  
THIS HOLIDAY

PIX COURTESY: ANANDA IN THE HIMALAYAS

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### TRAVEL : HEALTH

**HUMIDITY LEVELS IN THE AIRCRAFT WILL BE LESS THAN 10 PERCENT, SO WATER IS THE ONLY THING TO STOCK UP ON. AND DO STEER CLEAR OF ALCOHOL. ALSO, IF IT'S NIGHT, WEAR BLINDFOLDS AND SLEEP FOR SOME TIME**

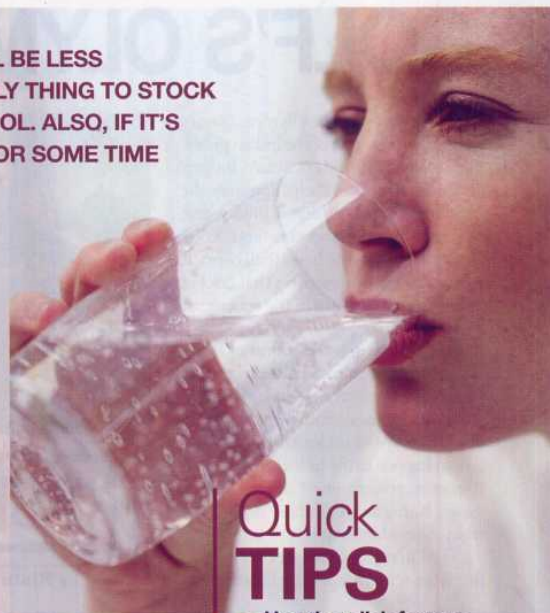
of water on your flight to avoid dehydration. Says Dr. R.S. Mishra, consultant physician, Max Hospital (Saket): "Humidity levels in the aircraft will be less than 10 percent, so water is the only thing to stock up on. And do steer clear of alcohol. Also, if it's night, wear blindfolds and sleep for some time." The emphasis should basically be on conserving your energy levels so that you don't pass out in fatigue the moment you land at your hotel!

For diabetics or epilepsy patients, a notification nametag with the doctors contact numbers for emergencies is a must. Diabetics should also keep insulin or the oral anti-diabetic drugs handy – carry it in the hand baggage in the plane or train and protect it from extreme heat or cold. Maintain your food habits even when your routine is different. Eat at regular intervals and do not overeat. Keep candies or toffees at hand in case of a sudden drop in blood sugar level. If you're travelling across countries and you have a long flight, don't forget to walk around in the plane every hour or so. This will help prevent formation of blood clots in the legs, a condition known as deep-vein thrombosis.



Watching what you eat will save you a lot of trouble later on. Vacations may be the time to binge, but it's advisable to indulge during the last few days. The first few days will not be ruined then in case you have a health problem. Says Dr. Mishra: "Eat foods that are fully cooked and served hot. And remember to consume only pasteurised dairy products. Also, do not drink any local unsealed drinks and avoid ice cubes. Stick to mineral, bottled soft drinks and raw veggies and fruits that you can wash and peel yourself."

Some more pointers from experts: sterilising your hands is important, so carry a liquid disinfectant with you in case soap and water are too much of a hassle. Stay hydrated with two litres of water a day. This will decrease the risk of heat exhaustion or heat stroke. Use sunglasses and headgear to cover your eyes in hot places. Also use an insect repellent containing DEET (30 percent to 50 percent) or picaridin (up to 15 percent). Swimming pools breed a lot of infection, so swim only in chlorinated water.



### Quick TIPS

- Use that disinfectant all the time for your hands. It will keep the germs away.
- Stay hydrated with 2 litres of water daily.
- Pack fruits, nutty bars, peanuts in your handbag
- Eat healthy at the hotel you stay at.
- Try to get some exercise done.
- Don't rush around too much. A break means lazing around for most of time!

Sometimes, even if you have a cold or an allergic reaction, you may be at greater risk of "airplane ear" because your Eustachian tubes may be blocked. Children usually suffer airplane ear more easily than adults as their Eustachian tubes are small and get easily blocked. So use decongestant medicines before the flight; a nasal spray or special earplugs that can help equalise the pressure during landings and takeoffs.

Load up on healthy snacks to tide over your journey. It's the best way to keep fit and not binge. Says author Sushmita Basu: "I always carry healthy snacks like crackers, fruits, peanut butter and nutty chocolates in my handbag so that I'm not dependent on flights for my food. In case my plane is late, I don't suffer hunger pangs."

Sometimes a little care can go a long way, so keep healthy and have a great vacation.

by Tashneem Chaudhury