



WELLNESS ON THE GO: 5 TIPS TO MAINTAIN (AND EVEN IMPROVE) WELLNESS WHEN YOU'RE TRAVELLING

Wellness on the go: 5 tips to maintain (and even improve) wellness when you're travelling

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For those with wanderlust, travelling isn't a luxury; it's a necessity. Seeing how other people eat, drink and live changes the fabric of your being for the better. But time in transit, jet lag, and unfamiliar routines can take a toll on your body and mind, and put a damper on your worldly adventures.

By implementing just a few simple practices into your travel routine, you can better support yourself to elevate your exploits, and return home without feeling like a wreck.

1. Start an anti-sedentary revolution

Even if you spend an intense hour at the hotel gym, that still leaves 23 hours in the day where you may be inactive, or sedentary, which slows circulation – the delivery of oxygen and nutrients, and removal of waste. Poor circulation has been linked to cardiovascular disease, cancer, diabetes and obesity, as well as depressed mood and mental fog.

Try weaving some kind of physical activity into every waking hour of the day, and choose activities that will challenge your heart and muscles to get the blood flowing. Opt for walking tours instead of bus tours, do some dynamic full-body stretches once you get out of bed, and carry your own luggage.

2. Have a plan to hydrate and fuel

Water and nutrition have far-reaching effects on your mental and physical health – two areas you want to flourish when travelling so you can get the most out of every new experience.

By remembering to carry a water bottle with you and drink at regular intervals, you can stave off dehydration, a culprit in slowed digestion, poor circulation, drowsiness and crankiness.

Another way to keep your body systems running smoothly and your mind operating optimally, is to add as many nutrient-dense foods to your plate as possible. Go ahead and savour the local indulgences, but also include deep-green and richly-hued vegetables whenever you can get your hands on them.

3. Protect your sleep schedule

Quality sleep – or lack of it – can change your entire outlook on a new day, and even negatively affect your ability to make self-nurturing choices in the way you think, eat and move. By

practicing a few bedtime and morning rituals, you can ensure an improved sleep, and a sunnier outlook on your traveller's lifestyle.

- **Wind down:** wrap up melatonin-impeding screen time at least an hour before bed – i.e. turn the TV off and put your phone and eReader away – and choose relaxing activities like reading under low light or summing up the day's highlights.
- **Prepare a sleep sanctuary:** a cool, pitch-black room is ideal for quality sleep. Unplug any devices that emit light and take advantage of the blackout blinds that most hotels offer – this will increase melatonin production for a solid slumber.
- **See the light:** fling open the blinds first thing in the morning so that natural light can flood your eyes, decreasing melatonin production and helping you wake up and be more alert.

4. Squeeze in mini workouts

Just a little bit goes a long way when it comes to strength, flexibility and cardiovascular fitness, and planning 10- to 30-minute workouts will not only boost your physical health but serves to boost your mental health as well. To maintain flexibility and joint mobility on the road, devise your own abbreviated series of stretches or check out online resources like MyYogaOnline.com, which has numerous routines under 15 minutes, featuring internationally renowned instructors.

To counteract all of the forward flexion that comes with time in transit, focus on strengthening the back of your body (and improving your posture) with exercises like squats, lunges, reverse flys, rows, and back extensions. Choosing these multi-muscle moves also gives you the biggest calorie-burning, metabolism-boosting bang for your buck.

5. Steal some quiet time

Just like you practice personal hygiene, "brain hygiene" is essential for stress management, physiological and psychological wellbeing. Whether you actually sit down to meditate or just stop to mindfully take in the sights, sounds and smells around you, quieting your mental chatter and training your attention, or ability to be present, has a substantially positive effect on your health and happiness.

Being in unknown territory with an unfamiliar routine can activate your sympathetic nervous system and put you in the stress response, which steals energy from other body systems like digestion and immunity, putting you at greater risk for tummy troubles and contracting illnesses.

By slowing down and consciously activating your parasympathetic nervous system, just by the simple act of breathing deeply, you can stimulate the relaxation response and boost your body's self-healing mechanisms.