

TRAVEL FITNESS: A PLAN OF ACTION TO KEEP YOU ACTIVE

It is easy to let a vacation or business trip destroy your fitness schedule and eating habits, but why let something as rewarding as a vacation or as exciting as a business trip leave you feeling unhealthy upon return?

With a little research and proper planning, you can create an easy-to-follow plan to keep you fit and healthy no matter where you travel, and you can come home feeling more healthy and energized than when you left.

Nature's Playground and Man's Monuments

There is no excuse for not finding places to exercise when every city has a great staircase, stadium or tall buildings where you can master the stairs without a machine. If stairs aren't your thing, cities have lots of places good for walking, running or even hiking. Ask the hotel concierge if there are parks or trails nearby; or if you have ventured to the mountains, ask for

a map of local hiking trails.

It is also a good idea to ask the concierge for a map of the city to find out how many of your destinations are reachable by foot. (Walking will increase your fitness and decrease your taxi fares.)

Prior to departure on your trip, find out if your hotel has a workout facility and a pool, and remember to pack your bathing suit and workout clothes. If they don't have a facility, they may be affiliated with a local gym where you can get a one-day pass for a small fee.

There are no limits to the exercise you can do while exploring new territory. Make the most of your trip, and get to know the city by foot.

Prepare for Power, No Excuses

If your hotel doesn't offer fitness accommodations, bring along a jump rope and an exercise tube. They are both lightweight and easy to transport. Jumping rope is one of the best forms of cardiovascular exercise, and you can do it anywhere.

With the exercise tube and a prearranged plan to keep you motivated, you can keep your entire body toned and energized without entering a gym or stepping on a piece of exercise equipment. Numerous magazines and websites offer workout instructions for each body part.

And, of course, body-weight exercises such as push-ups and crunches require no equipment at all. The point is to find a workout routine that suits your needs and follow it. Plan a specific time each day or every other day to do your strengthening and cardiovascular routines (a good plan is to alternate days between the two).

Remember that the 20 to 60 minutes you spend working out each day is for you, and try to stay on schedule.

Have Fun

Be sure to enjoy yourself and make the most of the area to which you have traveled. Remember to bring comfortable shoes so that you can easily get a workout while using your feet as your main mode of transportation.

Whether your trip is for business or vacation, remember that you should have some time for

yourself every day. Why not dedicate that time to improving your health and making yourself feel better?

Nutrition Road Tips

- Always drink plenty of water, particularly if you're flying.
- Conjure up a healthy meal in your mind prior to entering a restaurant, and stick to your plan as closely as possible.
- Try to eat at least three times per day to keep you from feeling famished and over-indulging at any one time.
- Pick up portable, healthy snacks at a local market so you won't be caught hungry in front of the mini-bar.
- Go ahead and splurge on regional dishes or local cuisine, but balance your diet by choosing lower-calorie foods at other meals.

Additional Resources

Schlosberg, S. (2002). *Fitness for Travelers: The Ultimate Workout Guide for the Road*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Books. Available at www.acefitness.org.

About.com: www.exercise.about.com/cs/fittingitin/a/ontheroadex.htm

If you are interested in information on other health and fitness topics, contact: American Council on Exercise, 4851 Paramount Drive, San Diego, CA 92123, 800-825-3636; or, go online at www.acefitness.org/GetFit and access the complete list of ACE Fit Facts.™



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