



Natural travel health tips:

With summer holidays just around the corner, we are quickly entering into travel season. Whether it is travelling locally, camping or travelling abroad, there are many natural ways to ensure we have a great time and avoid getting sick. Travelling can leave us vulnerable to infections because now we are in a new environment, exposed to different insects, water, people and we don't have full control of cleanliness in our environment. Here are my favorites, I don't leave home without these:

***The information provided is not intended to diagnose or treat any health condition. Please consult with your doctor or naturopathic doctor before starting any new supplement program as they may have interactions with certain medications. ***

1. Keep your immune system strong!

This is your first defense. Start these nutrients and food sources about 1-2 weeks before you travel or go camping.

1. Vitamin A in the form of Beta carotene is an excellent way to boost our natural immune system. Bright colored vegetables, carrots, spinach, sweet potatoes, pumpkin, cantaloupe, broccoli and apricots are great sources of Beta Carotene.

1 Tbsp of cod liver oil per day will provide about 5,000IU of Vitamin A. Do not take Vitamin A if you are pregnant.

2. Vitamin D. There continues to be ongoing research demonstrating the profound immune boosting effects of vitamin D. This supplement should be taken as the Vitamin D3 form and as a liquid. 2000IU per day is sufficient to boost our immune system. Sunlight is a great source of Vitamin D! The darker your skin, the harder it is to produce Vitamin D from sunrays.

3. Good old vitamin C. 1000-2000mg a day is great for prevention. Not the chewable orange candy flavored vitamin C which also contains sugar. I am talking about pure ascorbic acid vitamin C.

4. Echinacea is an excellent immune stimulator. Start taking 1-2 caps a day 1 week before and during your trip.



2. Prevent stomach related illnesses (traveler's diarrhea, food-borne illness)

Getting a stomach related illness is the best way to ruin a vacation. From traveler's diarrhea to food related illness, increasing our immunity in our digestive system will help your body fight off these nasty bugs! Remember, 70% of our immunity is in our digestive system!

1. The best protection starts with the good bacteria in our lower intestine and colon. These "good bugs" keep our digestive tract clean and fights off harmful bacteria, viruses, fungus and parasites. Start your high quality probiotic 1 week before your trip and take everyday on your trip.
2. Oregano oil. Yes, its tastes nasty! But it works! I would never travel without my oregano oil. This oil is a strong anti-bacterial and anti-fungal agent. Take 2 drops of high quality oregano oil in a small amount of water everyday. If you get a sore throat, gargle with this oil/water mixture and swallow two times a day.
3. Grapefruit seed extract. This STRONG anti-bacterial agent is excellent to use either for prevention or at the first sign of a stomach problem. Take 2 drops diluted in water. NEVER use full strength as it will burn!!!

3. Treat cuts, burns, and bruises.... naturally!

There are numerous natural ways to treat bites, burns and bruises. Here are some of my favorites!

1. Aloe Vera gel liquid or capsules. Nothing heals a cut or soothes a burn like aloe vera gel.
2. Tea tree essential oil. This is the best essential oil to use as an anti-bacterial agent to prevent infection and to treat insect bites. Use full strength or mix with a small amount of carrier oil, especially when using on children. It is essential to use high quality oils.
3. Arnica ointment or Traumeel homeopathic ointment is excellent for bruises, sprains and overall injuries. Do not use this on an open wound. Most health stores carry homeopathic Arnica or Traumeel.



4. How to prevent jet lag using melatonin.

Dealing with jet lag is always bothersome, especially for those 3-7 day getaways to different time zones. I find melatonin to be one of the best ways to prevent jet lag and enjoy your trip as soon as you get there! Here is the dosage I use:

Set your watch to the destination time when you are on the plane.

Take 3 mg melatonin on the airplane at 10pm destination time (or bedtime at your destination).

This will tell your body its time to go to sleep, you should sleep on the plane.

Expose yourself to bright light in the daytime hours upon arrival at your destination to shut down your own body's production of melatonin.

Take 3 mg melatonin at bedtime once at your destination.

This dosage and regimen should reset your sleep clock and prevent jet lag.

5. A few words about Lyme Disease.

Lyme Disease is a devastating neurological disease that is transmitted by ticks, some of which are found in BC. The number of patients coming in to my office with suspected Lyme disease is increasing, so I would like to quickly discuss the need for protecting yourself when camping or hiking on some of our west coast trails. I have provided some links for great information you may not get from our public health agencies! Remember, educate yourself and protect yourself and your loved ones!

Lyme disease is an illness caused by the bacterium, *Borrelia burgdorferi*, which can be spread through the bite of certain types of ticks. Lyme disease in humans can have serious symptoms. Lyme disease has been reported in parts of Europe, Asia, and throughout much of North America.

Ticks get infected when they feed on mice, squirrels, birds and other small animals that can carry the bacterium. Ticks then spread the bacterium to humans. Two types of ticks are responsible: the western blacklegged tick in British Columbia and the blacklegged tick, sometimes called the deer tick, in other parts of Canada. People can't spread Lyme disease to each other. Although dogs and cats can contract Lyme disease, there is no evidence that they can spread the infection to people. Pets can, however, carry infected ticks into homes and yards. Hunters may be at greater risk, because they spend more time in woodland and brush areas where ticks tend to live. However, Lyme disease cannot be contracted from eating deer.

Public Health Agency of Canada



Transmission of Lyme Disease:

The risk of contracting an infection from a tick is low during the first 24 hours of attachment, so promptly removing ticks can reduce your chances of contracting Lyme Disease. Tick attachment too short to transmit Lyme may still transmit co-infections such as Bartonella or Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever. Both nymphs and adults can feed on humans, but the small size of the nymph makes them difficult to detect and, hence, more likely to feed long enough to transmit the spirochete and cause Lyme Disease.

The best treatment is prevention! Avoid tick bites by limiting exposure to tick habitats, including grassy and wooded areas. Wear clothing to deter tick attachment, such as long shirt and pants, tuck your pants into your socks. Inspect the body carefully for ticks after being in a tick habitat. Remember, southern BC is a tick habitat! Remove attached ticks immediately! Make sure they are dead after removal. Ticks will survive the washing machine, they will not survive 40 minutes in the dryer before washing.

Good links:

http://www.ctv.ca/servlet/ArticleNews/story/CTVNews/20091113/w5_lyme_091114/20091114?s_name=W5

Good information site on Lyme Disease in British Columbia.

<http://www.canlyme.com/bc.html>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S25d4ByWhj4&feature=related>

Lyme disease found on the west coast trail. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IHsEMldNZEK>