

Staying Healthy on the Road

You can tell an experienced business traveler from one who is new to the experience. It is easy for someone new to business travel to participate in excesses on the road. As business traveler, you are an adult and you are trusted by your company to conduct yourself in a businesslike fashion during your time out representing the firm. But it is easy to let the idea of an expense account and free time in a far away town get the best of you and to let yourself go as you travel.

These kinds of excesses are the types of behavior that you will see an experienced business traveler avoid. If you are setting out on a lengthy business trip perhaps lasting many weeks and traversing many cities, the road itself can take a toll on your health and well being. The disruption to your normal life patterns, the hard work and the stress of making connections and moving from town to town can introduce levels of fatigue that can take a toll and even lead to illness on the road. And there is no more unpleasant experience than to be ill while traveling for business and to still have to do your duties despite your poor health.

It is for this reason that observing some strict rules of good living on the road will pay off over the life of the trip and make the rigors of travel much less serious. Much of the discipline of business travel involves simply introducing a daily routine to your life that includes some healthy activities so you can keep your physical, mental and emotional state in good shape and ready for business each and every day. Some simple but effective rules to live by for a healthy business travel experience include...

* Sleep routines. A good nights sleep is something we take for granted. And to get into a rested state takes more than just a bed and an alarm clock. You have routines at home that you use to cycle down toward rest. Adapt those to life on the road and allow yourself that hour before bed to get ready to rest as well as ample time to rest as well as sleep. Both are necessary for good health.

* Regular exercise. Most hotels have an exercise room or pool you can use to get some motion into your muscles. Sitting in airplanes or conference rooms can cramp your muscles and keep you from maintaining good flexibility. Even if it is nothing more than taking a walk after dinner or doing some simple exercises at night in the hotel, give your body some movement so stretch those muscles and get some fresh oxygen into your blood.

* Time not working. For the sake of your mental health, take some time

just for you. If you are in a town that has some fun things to see, get away from the business side of business travel and go to the zoo or a museum or see an attraction to give your mind a break from the stress of business. And take a few hours at night to relax in the hotel and read a book or watch your favorite TV show. You need that mental down time to recuperate and process all that is going on during your trip.

* Good foods. Don't cave into the temptation to eat fast food. Look for restaurants that will serve you well-rounded meals. Make sure you eat fruits, dairy, vegetables, breads and good healthy proteins each day.

* Don't drink. Alcohol, while fun, is a huge drain on your body's resources. The time drinking and recovering makes demands on your body that take away from your stamina and ability to stay healthy each day. So avoid alcohol other than perhaps a glass of wine at night. You will survive the trip so much better if you are careful about your alcohol consumption.

Some of these ideas seem almost ridiculously simple. But if you have done any business travel at all, you know that sometimes the simple requirement of a healthy diet and some time to yourself to exercise and rest can be elusive in a busy work schedule. But if you make it a priority to live well on the road as you do at home, you will come home ready to deal with home issues without having that long time to recover from the trip.

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