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Remember: You can live well with osteoporosis!

Travelling with Osteoporosis: Part 3 *Itinerary, passport, medications...Let's Go!*

This is the third in a series of four articles on travelling with osteoporosis. Missed the first two articles? Like all COPING newsletters it is available from our library and accessible with just a few clicks of your mouse. Click here to view [Parts 1 & 2](#).

Itinerary, passport, medications... Let's Go!

The old saying "Getting there is half the fun" can be true, especially if you are properly prepared. Consider these suggestions for your trip to and from your holiday destination.

1) Prepare well – A good night's sleep is essential before traveling. Wear comfortable, loose-fitting clothing and carry a light sweater to adjust for a cool aircraft, bus or train. Pack essentials, such as medications in their original containers, contact lens supplies, an extra pair of glasses, and a small flashlight or book light in your carry-on. You can get up-to-date government information on what you are allowed to bring on the plane in your purse or carry-on bag by checking the internet at the <http://www.tsa.gov> site.

2) Do not lift! – Remember that this is the time to be aware of every movement. You will be in unfamiliar surroundings and may be distracted, in a hurry and impatient. This is the time to slow down and do it right. A broken bone can quickly spoil a trip. Budget for extra time. Also budget for the fact that you may need to pay or tip for help if you need it and remember that it is only a small fraction of the cost of this wonderful trip. Be sure the people who are helping you with your luggage are legitimate.

3) Walking to gates – Airports often require long walks from gate to gate or gate to baggage pick-up. If you are uncertain about your ability to walk long distances, request **wheelchair assistance** in advance. You can always decline it when you arrive, but it may be very helpful if you find yourself stiff and sore after a long flight or if the destination airport is larger than you imagined with long distances from gate to gate. You may also arrange for **pre-boarding** so that you can request assistance with your carry-on bag and get settled into your seat before other passengers board. This also shortens the time you will be standing in a line-up while boarding the plane.

4) The carry-on bag - When flying, be aware that some flight attendants will not help you lift your carry-on bag into the overhead compartment for fear of injuring their back. Other travelers around you will almost always assist you instead, but you may need to explain why you are asking. Remember – osteoporosis is the silent disease that is usually not visible – so don't be shy to ask your co-travelers for help.

5) Other considerations

- a) Book an **aisle seat** so you can more easily **get up** every half hour to walk and do your stretching exercises.
- b) Drink lots of **water** and be aware that coffee and alcohol may dehydrate you further.
- c) **Protect your back** while sleeping. You may want to bring along a back support or purchase pillows or blankets on board. A well placed pillow or two can make all the difference during a long flight or ride.
- d) In addition, a well fitted bean bag neck pillow or traveler's pillow will **support your neck** as you sleep in a seated position. Some airlines sell inflatable pillows but these may not be as supportive or as comfortable as the one you purchase from your home healthcare supplier.
- e) Depending on your height it may help to **rest your feet** on a raised surface, such as your carry-on bag or purse, to better align your hips and knees.
- f) You may want to bring an iPod or MP3 player with **music**, stress reduction tapes, or a good paperback if you like to read.
- g) If you need heating rubs to relax your muscles try to bring unscented items. Co-travelers may have allergies to scents and you may not be permitted to use anything scented by the airline, rail or bus line. **Unscented** creams and **massage** oils are a good choice.

Next time, Part 4 - **Simple Exercises to Stay Limber While You Travel** and **We Have Arrived!**

FUNNY BONE:

Like all great travelers, I have seen more than I remember, and remember more than I have seen

Prevent the Fall, Prevent the Fracture – March 22, 2012

On Thursday, March 22, 2012, Janet Barnes and Sarah Nixon-Jackle from Saskatoon will be presenting on the topic of falls and fracture prevention. The virtual forum titled *Prevent the Fall, Prevent the Fracture* will explore why falls occur and suggest resources available to prevent a fall. Participate in the discussion on the relationship between osteoporosis, falls and fractures and explore risk factors for falls and preventive strategies individuals can use to reduce their risk. Join us through the comfort of your own computer and log in on the day of the event and have your questions answered in real time. [Read more.](#)



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