

Why the Immune System Can Never Go on Vacation

(ARA) - The immune system can never go vacation, summer or winter. A travel bug can ruin a trip that has been planned for months. Independent Traveler magazine says travelers "may be more than 100 times as likely to catch a cold on a plane as in normal daily rounds." There are several reasons travelers' immune systems need to do double-duty during vacations and summer trips.

Aircraft cabins, as well as trains, buses, terminals and stations are incubation zones for flu and cold germs. A 2006 study at Children's Hospital in Boston, Mass. confirmed that, like us, a microbe's favored mode of travel is airplanes. Likewise, trains, buses, taxis and rental cars can be breeding grounds for traveling germs -- not to mention airport waiting areas, restaurants and public rest rooms.



Travel means additional stress as well. Travelers experience pressure from getting ready to go, preparing homes, businesses and pets to be cared for in their absence and making it to gates and connections on time. Changes in schedules, diet and sleep patterns are also factors that combine to set travelers up for colds or flu.

"Travelers should take the same precautions they would during the regular cold and flu season -- hand washing, drinking lots of water, a healthy diet and as much rest as possible," says Dr. Elin Ritchie of Taos, N.M.

Travelers who want to take their immune defense a step further might consider additional measures to insure healthy travel. One defensive option is a probiotic-based immune product called Del-Immune V (www.delimmune.com). "I take this prior to, during and after travel," says Ritchie. She also recommends the product to her patients planning vacations for a wide range of potential immune issues.

Terri Hendrick, a Boulder, Colo. interior designer, used the product to stay well on a trip to Vietnam in 2007. "I started taking Del-Immune V 2 days before I left. Usually when I travel I have digestive problems -- especially in Asia. This was the first time in all my travels I did not have some kind of digestive disorders. The other five people on the trip quickly started trading a cold. When I gave the product to my fellow travelers, they recovered quickly," she says.

Another protective measure is the Nozin nasal sanitizer (www.nozin.com), a nasal swab moistened with a pre-measured homeopathic solution. According to the product Web site, laboratory tests showed the product was effective in killing at least 99 percent of bacterial pathogens and 99 percent of viruses, including rhinovirus type-14, often responsible for the common cold.

A product reviewer on the ThreeKidCircus.com blog site writes, "Before I entered the airport on the morning of my flight, I swabbed. Before my return flight, I swabbed again. I returned home with no sickness. Even though my seatmate on the flight home was hacking and sneezing, and despite the coughing and nose blowing that was going on all over the plane, I was untainted. And despite coming home to a sick family, I've been swabbing once a day and I'm still not sick."

"We take our immune systems for granted, but it is the immune system that is the front-line defense against foreign invaders. It doesn't take much to protect ourselves and ensure healthy travel," Ritchie says.

Courtesy of ARAcontent

The information contained in this is for educational purposes only. This does not and cannot provide medical advice for any person, which requires direct medical care. It should not be used as a substitute for medical care and advice of your physician. There may be variations on the treatment that your physician may recommend based on individual facts and circumstances. Medicine is a dynamic science and should be considered accordingly. All readers should evaluate the information for their own purposes.