

The Washington Post

[NEWS](#) | [OPINIONS](#) | [SPORTS](#) | [ARTS & LIVING](#) | [Discussions](#) | [Photos & Video](#) | [Going Out Guide](#) | [CLASSIFIEDS](#) | [JOBS](#) | [CARS](#) | [REAL ESTATE](#)

Planning for Health Emergencies Eases Stress of Family Travel

Sunday, March 9, 2008; 12:00 AM

SUNDAY, March 9 (HealthDay News) -- While family vacations can be fun, they can become extremely stressful if there are unexpected health problems, experts say.

Parents need to include preparations for possible health troubles in their holiday planning, says Dr. Stephen Park, an assistant professor of pediatrics and communicable diseases at the University of Michigan C. S. Mott Children's Hospital.

"We, as parents, pay a lot of attention to things like packing toys and packing clothes, but sometimes we don't pay as much attention to preparing for potential or anticipated health issues," Park said in a prepared statement.

He offered a number of health-related travel tips.

First, create a travel health kit that includes medicines that are regularly taken by members of the family, as well as medicines for sudden ailments, such as congestion or a rash. He recommended packing a fever reducer, an antihistamine, bandages and a topical antibiotic ointment, but advised against including an anti-diarrhea medicine for traveler's diarrhea. It's better to consult with your doctor to learn about antibiotics that treat bacterial infections that can cause diarrhea.

Parents also should consider specific features of the family's vacation, such as the destination's climate. For example, bring plenty of sunscreen for sunny locales, as well as aloe vera to relieve sunburn pain. If you plan to spend a lot of time outdoors, bring insect repellent, mosquito netting and poison ivy treatments.

Advertisement » Your Ad Here



If you died today,
who would fund
your family's future?

Compare Rates From
Top Life Insurance
Companies.

10-Yr Level Term
Life Insurance
\$500,000 Policy
(monthly premiums)

age	male	female
35	\$15.75	\$14.00
40	\$20.56	\$17.94
45	\$31.06	\$27.13
50	\$45.06	\$38.06

Click Here
Get a free quote!

ACQUOTE
Saving You Money For Life

Think about potential issues related to your mode of transportation. For example, air travel can cause ear pain. Feeding a small child during take-off and landing to generate a suck-and-swallow motion can help ease ear pain, while older children can get relief by chewing gum or blowing bubbles. If a child is prone to motion sickness, don't sit in the middle of the plane over the wings.

If you're traveling by car, you can help prevent motion sickness by discouraging your children from reading in the car or looking down. If they start to feel ill, they should focus their eyes on a point in front of them, Park said.

When booking accommodations, parents should research the location of the closest urgent care center, night-time care center and emergency room. Be sure to bring the phone number of your doctor, so you can call to get answers to medical questions.

Park also noted that traveling throws off normal routines, which can cause children to become grumpy and difficult.

"One of the biggest concerns of parents when they are traveling with children is not so much about health but about behavior. Parents need to relax as much as possible and plan ahead. Anticipate that children may be a little off while traveling, so be patient with routines," Park said.

More information

The Nemours Foundation has more about [staying healthy while your travel](#).

SOURCE: University of Michigan, news release, March 3, 2008