Flying With Fibromyalgia: What You Need to Know

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Avoid Fatigue, Stress, Pain and Other Symptoms While Flying With Fibromyalgia

Do you have fibromyalgia and feel high levels of stress when traveling? You're certainly not alone. Below are the most common symptoms that can become aggravated when flying with fibromyalgia, as well as some tips that can help you feel better.

Avoid Fatigue

Traveling can be tiring for anyone, and you already have low energy levels dealing with regular, daily activities. Consider getting more rest starting a few weeks before you take a trip.

Plan well in advance to avoid spending many hours preparing and packing last minute. If you have a long flight, make it as comfortable as you can (like bringing a pillow, foot rest, etc.). Talk to your doctor to see if you can use melatonin, a supplement that helps with sleep problems, including jet lag — especially if you change the time zone — to make flying with fibromyalgia less tiresome.

Avoid Stress

Stress and anxiety are common symptoms associated with fibromyalgia. Make sure these troubles don’t aggravate you during your trip.

The best way to prevent stress and anxiety is to plan out the details of the trip and avoid unexpected situations as much as possible. For example, have everything organized and packed at least one day before your trip. Check the itinerary, hotel information, transportation options (i.e. bus, cabs), restaurants and medical clinic near the place you will stay and other travel information.

Try practicing relaxation, visualization or deep breathing techniques on a regular basis, as well as when you experience acute episodes of stress or anxiety.

Avoid Pain

By preventing fatigue and stress, you are less likely to experience more pain during traveling. But to be extra cautious, make sure you take muscle relaxants and other medication with you.

Try some stretching exercises while you are on the plane or at the airport to prevent muscle pain and stiffness. It might be a good idea to also book a massage, or attend some yoga or gym classes while away. You may also want to bring along some heating pads.

Pay Attention to What You Eat

Fibromyalgia sufferers frequently have a sensitive stomach and are more likely to develop irritable bowel syndrome (IBS) or other digestive issues. Therefore, the change of diet while traveling may be a challenge.

Try to drink water only from bottles, eat simple, healthy foods like boiled eggs, grilled chicken or steamed vegetables.

Avoid sauces, salad dressings, mayonnaise, or highly processed foods with lots of fat and sugar. If you follow a gluten-free diet at home, do some research and see if there will be restaurants or grocery stores that carry gluten-free products in the area where you will travel.

Chose herbal teas instead of coffee or soda. Include in your first aid travel kit some medication/supplements in case you experience diarrhea, constipation, nausea (especially if you have chronic nausea), vomiting, abdominal cramps or other digestive symptoms. Avoid alcohol as much as you can.

Avoid Foggy Memory

Fibro fog may worsen when you are in a new place, surrounded by strangers. Always have a to-do list with you, review it a few times throughout the day, and adjust it in case your plans change.

Save personal information required for the trip in your phone or laptop such as a PIN for credit cards, your room number and the address of your hotel, telephone numbers and any other relevant information.