

Minimizing Jet Lag

Jet travel, especially to countries so far away, disrupt the body systems, which are dependent on a biological clock. New time zones are superimposed on our “old” ones affecting our internal rhythms and jet lag is the result. It takes time to adjust our bodies physically and emotionally. There are some things we can do to prevent or offset the affects of jet lag:

- Wear loose fitting clothing and comfortable shoes while traveling to minimize constriction and maintain optimal circulation.
- Avoid caffeine and alcohol while traveling as these contribute to dehydration.
- Exercise your legs and arms to prevent muscle fatigue and promote circulation while flying. These will also help to prevent blood clots from forming in your lower extremities. Stand and stretch or take a short walk up and down the aisles every couple of hours. Rotate your head, shoulders, arms, and ankles hourly while sitting.
- Drink a glass of water or juice every hour while you travel to fight dehydration.
- Eat as little as possible to reduce your body’s metabolic rate.
- Set your watch to the new time zone and begin to think of yourself as already on that new time. After you arrive, function as if you were already accustomed to it, i.e., go to bed and have your meals on the destination time.
- Take an aspirin or other over the counter anti-inflammatory agent to reduce muscle pains from travel. Continue to drink plenty of fluids to combat dehydration.