Helpful Tips for Traveling With MS

by BRENDA VANTA

Tips for an Enjoyable Trip

If you have been diagnosed with MS, you have likely learned how to manage your symptoms during day-to-day activities. But what should you do if you change your daily routine to take a trip? Consider the following tips.

Basic Things You'll Need When Traveling With MS

Get together your essential travel documents such as passport and other ID cards, some cash, credit and debit cards. Your health insurance and health card should also be handy. It’s worth making a copy of all official documents. Next, gather other important documents specific to your trip such as flight, hotel and other reservations and emergency contact info.

Electronic devices should be placed in a special bag, along with their chargers, so they can be easily checked in at the airport.

The medication and supplements you're taking, as well as a health aid kit, should all be organized. See your doctor a few weeks before you leave and ask for an extra prescription, in case you need it. For example, you can get a 12-week supply of prednisone in oral form. Having some extra prescription medication, will leave you prepared in the off chance that there is some delay in your return, or if you need to take more than usual during the trip.

Choose the clothes you take with you wisely, so you are prepared even if it rains constantly or the temperature rises or drops significantly.

Special Items to Include

When you pack your clothes, keep in mind that you may experience more fatigue or feel more pain while you are away. Chose loose-fitted shirts, dresses or pants that can you can put on or take off easily.

If you have previously had episodes of incontinence, have some pads of different sizes with you, just in case you need them. If you experience pain and stiffness, bring some heating pads and ointments.

If you travel to the Caribbean or third world countries, you may want to include in your first aid kit some medication for traveler's diarrhea such as kaopectate. In case it happens, remember to drink plenty of water to avoid dehydration.

If you use mobility devices such as a cane or walker, you might have trouble fitting these into your luggage. Make sure to call the airline ahead of time and ask about their list of allowed items and the accepted size.

If you use drugs in injectable form, you need to inform the airport staff about them. Also ask if they supply ice in

case your medication (i.e. Avonex, Copaxone) needs to be stored at lower temperatures. Ice holders and the medication should be placed in white, transparent bags.

Make your trip as comfortable as possible. Bring along any special pillow, footrest and blankets that you use at home and make you feel comfortable

See a Doctor ASAP if You Get Symptoms

You will, of course, try to avoid flare ups, but the stress, heat, and fatigue of traveling may exacerbate your symptoms despite your efforts. If you have any signs of an infection (like cold or flu), new bladder symptoms, fever, or worsening of your symptoms, see a doctor in a medical clinic or hospital nearby.