

Spring Break Travel Safety

With March comes Spring Break a time when many take the opportunity to travel and enjoy a much deserved vacation. Listed below are some travel tips to help make vacations safe and fun for everyone involved.



Traveling by Airplane

- Allow your family extra time to get through security - especially when traveling with younger children.
- Have children wear shoes and outer layers of clothing that are easy to take off for security screening. Children younger than 12 years are no longer required to remove their shoes for routine screening.
- Strollers can be brought through airport security and gate-checked to make travel with small children easier.
- Talk to your children about the security screening process before coming to the airport. Let them know that bags (backpack, dolls, etc.) must be put in the X-ray machine and will come out the other end and be returned to them



- **Discuss the fact that it's against the law to make threats such as; "I have a bomb in my bag." Threats made jokingly (even by a child) can delay the entire family and could result in fines.**
- **Arrange to have a car safety seat at your destination or bring your own along. Airlines will typically allow families to bring a child's car safety seat as an extra luggage item with no additional luggage expense. Check the airline's Web site ahead of time so you know their policy before you arrive at the airport**
- **When traveling on an airplane, a child is best protected when properly restrained in a car safety seat appropriate for the age, weight and height of the child until the child weighs more than 40 lbs. and can use the aircraft seat belt. The car safety seat should have a label noting that it is FAA-approved. Belt-positioning booster seats cannot be used on airplanes, but they can be checked as luggage (usually without baggage fees) for use in rental cars and taxis.**
- **Although the FAA allows children under age 2 to be held on an adult's lap, it is recommended that families explore options to ensure that each child has her own seat. If it is not feasible to purchase a ticket for a small child, try to select a flight that is likely to have empty seats where your child could ride buckled in her car safety seat.**
- **Pack a bag of toys and snacks to keep your child occupied during the flight.**

- In order to decrease ear pain during descent, encourage your infant to nurse or suck on a bottle. Older children can try chewing gum or drinking liquids with a straw.
- Wash hands frequently, and consider bringing hand-washing gel to prevent illnesses during travel.
- Consult your pediatrician before flying with a newborn or infant who has chronic heart or lung problems or with upper or lower respiratory symptoms.
- Consult your pediatrician if flying within 2 weeks of an episode of an ear infection or ear surgery.

International Travel

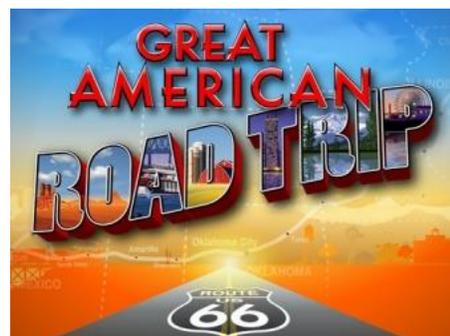


- If traveling internationally, check with your doctor to see if your child might need additional vaccines, and make sure your child is up-to-date on routine vaccinations. Bring mosquito protection in countries where mosquito-borne diseases such as malaria are present.
- In order to avoid jet lag, adjust your child's sleep schedule 2-3 days before departure. After arrival, children should be encouraged to be active outside or in brightly lit areas during daylight hours to promote adjustment.

- Stay within arm's reach of children while swimming, as pools may not have safe, modern drain systems and both pools and beaches may lack lifeguards.
- Ensure that your child wears a life jacket when on smaller boats, and set an example by wearing your life jacket.
- Conditions at hotels and other lodging may not be as safe as those in the U.S. Carefully inspect for exposed wiring, pest poisons, paint chips, or inadequate stairway or balcony railings.
- When traveling, be aware that cribs or play yards provided by hotels may not meet current safety standards. If you have any doubt about the safety of the crib or play yard, ask for a replacement or consider other options. (Also applies to travel in the U.S.)

Traveling by Car

- Road travel can be extremely hazardous in developing countries. Make sure each passenger is buckled and that children use the appropriate car safety seat. Let your driver know you are not in a hurry, ask that there be no cell phone use, and emphasize that you will reward safe driving.
- Always use a car safety seat for infants and young children. All infants and toddlers should ride in a rear-facing car safety seat until 2 years of age or until they reach the highest weight or height allowed by the car safety seat manufacturer. Once your child has outgrown the rear-facing height or weight limit, she should ride in a forward-facing car safety seat. Updated recommendations on safe travel can be found on the following parenting web site: www.healthychildren.org/carseatguide.



- **Most rental car companies can arrange for a car safety seat if you are unable to bring yours along. However, they may have a limited selection of seats. Check that the seat they provide is appropriate for the size and age of your child, that it appears to be in good condition, and that the instruction manual is provided before accepting it.**
- **A child who has outgrown her car safety seat with a harness (she has reached the top weight or height allowed for her seat, her shoulders are above the top harness slots, or her ears have reached the top of the seat) should ride in a belt-positioning booster seat until the vehicle's seat belt fits properly (usually when the child reaches about 4' 9" in height and is between 8 to 12 years of age).**



- **All children under 13 years of age should ride in the rear seat of vehicles.**
- **Never place a rear-facing car safety seat in the front seat of a vehicle that has an airbag.**
- **Set a good example by always wearing a seat belt, even in a taxi.**

- **Children often become restless or irritable when on a long road trip. Keep them occupied by pointing out interesting sights along the way and by bringing soft, lightweight toys and favorite music for a sing-along.**
- **Plan to stop driving and give yourself and your child a break about every two hours.**
- **Never leave your child alone in a car, even for a minute. Temperatures inside the car can reach deadly levels in minutes, and the child can die of heat stroke.**
- **In addition to a travelers' health kit (<http://www.cdc.gov/travel/other/travelers-health-kit.htm>), parents should carry safe water and snacks, child-safe hand wipes, diaper rash ointment, and a water- and insect-proof ground sheet for safe play outside.**