



TRAVEL TIPS

Invite your group to share their travel experiences. What has triggered their vestibular symptoms? Have they found successful coping strategies? Review and discuss the suggestions below. If additional ideas come out of your conversation, email them to veda@vestibular.org to be added to this list.

1. **Trip Planning:** Plan your trip well in advance. You should start planning anywhere from six to nine months before your expected travel date. Consider using a travel planner who specializes in handicap travel.
2. **Medical:** Check with your doctor to make sure it is safe to fly. Prepare your body well in advance, e.g. by exercising, walking (if you know you'll be doing a lot of this), extra car trips, balance exercises, etc.
3. **Transportation:** Check with your mode of travel, i.e. plane, bus, train, boat, car, etc. Make sure they have handicap accommodations you may need, e.g. wheelchair access, travel access between gates at airports, etc. Some forms of travel (e.g. train) offer backward facing seats, which can sometimes increase vertigo symptoms. Always face forward when moving. Alert your travel attendant to your medical condition and special needs. Bring motion sickness medication, if needed. Decongestants can help equalize middle ear pressure when you are changing elevation rapidly or frequently. When moving, focus on a stationary point on the horizon. Some people find it helpful to close their eyes entirely.
4. **Hotel/Accommodations:** Not all hotels or travel destinations have wheelchair access or it may be limited to first come, first served. Consider renting or borrowing a wheelchair if imbalance is an issue for you. You may also ask about other handicap accommodations. Request a ground floor room so that you do not have to travel up and down on an elevator frequently.
5. **Triggers:** Know what triggers your vestibular disorder so you can avoid them and/or deal with the consequences. Make a list of triggers and treatments and share this with your travel companions. If bright light bothers you, bring a hat and sunglasses. If noise bothers you, bring ear plugs.
6. **Communication:** It is important that you communicate with all members of your traveling group, even if it is just you and your spouse. Explain your

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expectations, and make sure they have a clear understanding of what your limitations are.

7. **Day Planning:** Before traveling, make sure you have a clear plan of what places you might visit each day, and try to anticipate any roadblocks you may encounter.
8. **Crisis Planning:** Make an exit plan for each event you attend. It is important that you have a strategy to exit the venue if you become overwhelmed or ill. Make these plans in advance and make sure your party is on board with the plan.
9. **Managing your symptoms:** Don't overdo it. If you do, recognize what's going on and make adjustments. You may have create a signal with your traveling companion so that they recognize the signs and can help you.
10. **Rest:** Make sure to take plenty of breaks. If you get tired, consider calling it a day, or adjust to a venue that is less challenging. If you are traveling for long periods of time, make sure to drink plenty of water and get up and move around frequently. If you have the option to get disembark from your mode of transportation it is helpful to walk around on a non-moving surface.
11. **Nutrition:** Make sure you stay hydrated, eat regularly, and stay on your current medicine schedule.

Enjoy! Let yourself have fun. Don't dwell on your disorder. Remember, everyone is there to have fun, including you. A vacation is an important way for you to “reset” from life's everyday challenges. Remember to stay safe, but most of all have fun!

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