Traveling Tips for Psoriasis

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Tips to Prepare, Protect, and Profit from Your Trip

Whether you're traveling for business or pleasure, a trip away from home can be the perfect recipe for a psoriasis flare. From shifting sleep patterns to sudden changes in climate, you will meet a number of threats to your skin's delicate equilibrium. Arming yourself with a firm understanding of psoriasis triggers and clever ways to keep your condition in check will allow you to enjoy your trip, no matter where you go!

How Travel Can Inflame Psoriasis

Travel shakes up your normal routine, and you may not have the skin care conveniences you tend to take for granted at home. The first step to protection is learning about the discomforts you can expect to meet *en route:*

- **Close quarters and recycled air**. When you're packed into an airplane cabin with a selection of sniffling travelers, your chances of catching a bug will skyrocket. Since psoriasis-supressing drugs interrupt your natural immunity, you're probably at a greater risk of infection than your neighbor.
- **Interrupted sleep**. You stress your body when you don't get enough sleep. That physical and psychological stress can lead directly to a psoriasis flare-up, and unless you get the rest you need, it can be difficult to get those symptoms under control.
- **Neglecting your skin care routine.** It's easy to forget about moisturizing. If your journey is long and involved your skin can dry out very fast, resulting in new plaques or intense itch.
- **Dehydration.** When it comes to hydration, moisturizing is only one side of the coin – you need to make sure you're drinking enough water, too. Unfortunately, other thoughts and activities can take priority over getting your 8 glasses when you're on the road.

Prepare for these possibilities in the best ways you can: consider taking a sleep aid, practice little meditation exercises, pack extra heavy duty moisturizer, and drink more water than you think you need. Dress in loose, light layers to ease the pressure on your itchy skin, too.

Protect and Prepare Before You Go

When you take control over your psoriasis before you leave, you minimize your chances of experiencing a nasty flare-up or complication while you're away. Reduce stress and restore balance with a few simple preparations:

- **Get a blood test**. If you're taking drugs to suppress your immune response, you'll be more susceptible to infection, and that means you need to be extra diligent. Your doctor may want to run a couple of routine blood tests, just to make sure you're illness-free before you take off.
- **Get permission** (**in writing).** Liquid medication can pose a problem for air travel. An official note from your doctor will allow you to keep your medication in your carry-on, and if they need to be refrigerated, you'll be able to pack your meds on ice and keep them with you.
- **Pack for problems.** Even if you're feeling great in the days leading up to your departure, you're still at

risk for psoriasis itch. Pack antihistamines to take when you feel an itch coming on, so you don’t have to suffer through the discomfort, or make it worse by scratching.

Traveling with psoriasis is all about balance, whether that’s getting just enough sun or knowing when to take a rest. Talk with your doctor about your concerns, listen to your body, and help out your skin wherever you can. The more quickly you can curb distracting symptoms, the more enjoyable any trip will be.