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Healing

Staying Healthy While Traveling

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Continuing last month's column on the homeopathic first-aid kit for travelers, this month we include some remedies from ayurveda and some valuable travel tips.

Travelers often lose their footing and fall, scraping their knees or elbows. If the skin is broken or there is scraping of the skin, lacerations, abrasions, nicks or ulceration, calendula acts as a remarkable healing agent, especially if the associated pain is greater than one would expect. It rapidly promotes healing without scarring. It comes in ointment, liquid and gel forms and is spectacular as an after shave lotion.

Mag. Phos.-a cell salt of magnesia phosphoriosa-is the great reliever of spasm, especially if there is cramping of muscles with radiating pain. Neuralgia pains that are relieved by warmth will respond to this cell salt. It is the remedy of choice when sleep eludes one because of being tired, exhausted from activity (especially mental), covering too many time zones in travel and the frequent hassles at airports. The 6x potency will do wonders. A few pills allowed to dissolve on the tongue at hourly intervals will bring sleep to the weary.

The typical "morning after" is greatly relieved by nux vomica. The cause is food and drink overindulgence. The first symptoms are that heavy feeling of discomfort in the abdomen, maybe accompanied by nausea and sour taste (especially in males). The life-style of modern man leads to such symptoms, which are aggravated by travel. Nux works best when taken in the evening.

The bowels are often disturbed by travel because of lack of exercise, sitting for long periods of time, mental tension, often extreme changes in diet and a tendency to not drink sufficient fluids. When there is constipation, an eastern herbal mix called triphala will give a very gentle stimulus to the bowel to move. It has a tendency to make the stool more fluid so it can be passed easily. It can be taken in tablet or in the form of tea. Psyllium seed husks, being a hydrophilic, may also be used to stimulate the bowel to move by forming a firm but soft stool. This can also be used in some diarrheas to help absorb the water in the bowel and to prevent the too frequent movements.

When traveling it is very important to drink plenty of pure water. If there is any doubt of its purity, purchase bottled water or well capped effervescent type soft drinks. Do not allow them to be uncapped except in your presence and be sure the top is dry before opening. Never drink iced beverages, for the ice is usually made from tap water and is thus suspect. In the back country and most third world countries it may be necessary to treat the water to assure purity. A 2% tincture of iodine made with ethyl alcohol will make almost any water safe to drink. Eight drops per gallon and a waiting time of ten minutes may be required. There are other preparations for this purpose too, visit your large sporting goods store and/or your pharmacist.

Sun screen protection is vital in tropical countries and mosquito repellents are a must wherever malaria may be endemic. Call the Board of Health or State Department to locate these areas. Remember that if you have prescription drugs (and glasses), be sure that they are labeled and have a duplicate available.

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