



Traveling

If you are a person who enjoys traveling, you may be worried that those days are over because you have lupus. After all, the stress of travel is just the opposite of what someone with lupus needs when seeking rest and recreation!

But travel can be made easier. Airports today have wheelchairs, motorized transporters, and attendants to help you if you have difficulty walking or carrying luggage. Wheelchairs may also be available at museums and other public institutions. If you have joint pain or any difficulty walking, you should not hesitate to ask for these services, even if you might not regularly ask for any kind of help at home or work. You may also want to look into renting a motorized scooter or wheelchair for the duration of your trip.

Advance airline check-in, including printing out the boarding pass, is another stress-saving technique, and can be done on most airline Websites within 24 hours of takeoff. Some airlines allow passengers to choose a seat in advance as well, whether online or through an agent. Planning a trip in advance greatly increases the chances of getting a seat with extended leg room. Taking a mild sleeping pill can help you rest on long flights. Whether traveling by car, bus, train, or plane, it is important to get up, stretch, and walk around during a long trip, to improve blood circulation.

You should make arrangements to have your prescribed medications available when you are traveling, either by taking your medicines with you, or by carrying prescription orders that can be filled at a pharmacy at your final destination. Medicine can be sent ahead to a hotel or residence, or can be packed in luggage. But because mail can be misplaced and checked bags can be damaged, delayed, or lost, it's always a good idea to pack at least a two-day supply of medicine in your carry-on luggage. In those instances, it's important that medications are in their original, marked containers to avoid unnecessary questions and possible confiscation. If the original, labeled medication containers are not available, carry a doctor's note confirming that the prescriptions are for you. Keep all medication containers together in a clear zip-lock bag to make things easier at security checkpoints.

When making hotel accommodations, you may want to request a room that conforms to ADA standards, such as grab bars for the bathtub, wider access for the shower, elevated toilet seats, and less furniture to allow for wheelchair access.

There are alternatives to air travel and hotel stays. Ocean cruises offer a chance to relax and travel, with a room whenever a nap is needed, readily available medical care, and choices of meal times. Some cruises also are wheelchair- and scooter-accessible. Short bus trips or train rides to areas of interest also offer comfort for travelers. Even local events and day trips can provide the enrichment of traveling without going far from home.

When vacationing, try not to over-schedule your days with too many events, and make sure you set aside time for rest -- just as you do at home.

Related Information

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