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# Travelers' guide

## Healthy Eating & Activity

"Three weeks into the long-term weight management program, I received a promotion to a job that required two weeks of travel per month. With a new job, a new body, and new-found confidence, I was ready to hit the road. Despite my best intentions, after one month of travel I found myself gaining weight. When I got on the road, I fell off the wagon." — Pam E., business traveler

Unfortunately, Pam's story is all too common for business travelers or frequent pleasure travelers. The best of plans may have to be abandoned or changed due to bad weather, delayed flights, or demanding clients. All too often, weight managers find themselves returning to old habits of eating larger evening meals, grabbing a snack at the airport to pass the time between long flight delays, or snacking in their hotel rooms in the evening as a way to unwind from the stress of the day. Although eating may feel relaxing at first, it can cause extra, unwanted pounds to return, adding more stress to the already frustrated traveler. Fortunately, Pam's story has a happy ending:

"I panicked. I had gained 7 pounds in just 4 weeks. At this rate, I'd undo all my hard work in a matter of months. I had been through the OPTIFAST Program once before and regained my weight. Now it was happening again. This time, instead of staying away from the program and the scale, I went back at my first opportunity to attend a long-term management group. The group leader and the members of my class helped me develop a plan to work with the uncontrollable travel environment. I learned some tricks from other more experienced travelers. I also started calling and emailing the program staff, while on the road, when I felt myself coming loose at the ends."

## tools for success

- Understand how to plan ahead for meals while away from home.
- Identify ways to become more active when traveling and how to implement your plan.
- Select appropriate meals in unfamiliar circumstances.

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## Adapting To Life On The Road

Life on the road is a common lifestyle for many people. Although frequent business travelers say the lack of a set routine soon becomes commonplace, many also admit the ever-changing schedule can be wearisome. Many business travelers report they often have less than one week of notice before taking a trip. If you are one of them, having survival tips is the key to weight maintenance success.

### Before You Leave

- Plan what you will eat at the airport. Larger airports offer a variety of dining choices, ranging from restaurants serving regional specialties to familiar fast foods to bagel and coffee bars. Smaller airports or the commuter terminal of a major airport may only offer a snack bar with limited choices. Plan to eat before arriving at the airport when possible.
- Even if you plan on eating a meal at the airport, it is important to take charge of the situation and make the extra effort to carry along an OPTIFAST® product or meal replacement, fresh fruit, and a bottle of water, purchased at the airport for unexpected delays or change of plans.
- If you are driving, determine what types of eating opportunities will come along your route. Will you be traveling long stretches of remote highways? Or will you be passing through metropolitan areas with a variety of eating choices? On the first day of your travels, you may choose to pack a cooler with ice, a sandwich, vegetables, fruit, yogurt, and water for your meal. In the town where you are staying, consider stopping at a local grocery store to pick up additional cut-up vegetables to use as part of the next day's lunch or as snacks as you drive. Taking time to get off the road and eat can give you a chance to unwind from the stress of driving, as well as stretch your legs. If you are stopping at restaurants, choose

salads, grilled fish or chicken, fruit salads, and other simply prepared foods without a lot of added fat. Be careful with salad dressings which can add hundreds of calories; always order dressings on the side.

- Consider staying in a room equipped with a small (empty) refrigerator and microwave. Plan to make your own breakfast and dinner. Sarah, a frequent business traveler, always books these mini apartments. "I buy cereal, skim milk, an assortment of fruit, cut-up veggies and some of my favorite frozen dinners. It's not exciting, but it's reliable. I often have lunch with clients, so it's the best way I can control calories. And I'm too beat at the end of the day to look for exciting dining that will meet my calorie needs. Because I save on my food bill, my boss is willing to pay the slightly higher room rate." Pack rubber exercise bands and an iPod with your favorite music for a walk in the evening.

For leisure travelers, condo rentals are another option for getting all the conveniences of home while away from home. You can prepare meals and eat out less often. They are a good choice if you are traveling with a group. In addition, many offer an on-site fitness facility or are located in areas with recreational activities nearby.

### Staying Active On The Road

- First, accept that your exercise routine may be less vigorous and well-balanced than the one you follow at home. Resolve to do whatever you can, whenever you can, and wherever you can.
- Ask if your hotel offers exercise equipment that can be brought to your room or if there is a DVD in your room to play an exercise disc. Or use the DVD player on your computer.
- Explore fitness opportunities in the area you will be staying before making hotel reservations.
- Many hotels offer indoor swimming pools and treadmills. If not, ask if the hotel has a facility-

# Travelers' Planning Checklist

## Instructions

Below is a checklist of things to consider prior to travel. Fifteen minutes spent pre-planning may help prevent last minute decisions.

I will travel by  auto  plane  train  bus  boat. (Check all that apply.)

Eating Checklist	Yes	No	N/A	Notes
I own a small cooler and ice packs.				
I will be able to utilize area grocers.				
I have allowed myself enough time to get out and stretch, walk, and avoid eating in the car.				
I have contacted someone (friend, relative, business acquaintance, hotel concierge) at my destination and am aware of available restaurants in the area as well as their names.				
I called or did online review ahead of time to find out my menu options.				
Healthy, low-calorie food options are available.				
I have a backup plan (such as meal replacements) in case a meal is misplaced or cancelled.				
If my travel plans call for being in one place for 4 days or more, I will ship OPTIFAST® products to my hotel.				
I have packed my food diary and exercise log.				
I have told OPTIFAST® Program staff that I will be away.				

Hotel/Motel Checklist	Yes	No	N/A	Notes
Is there a stocked refrigerator in the room? If so, I will refuse to accept the key.				
Is there room service? What are my options?				
Is there a doorknob breakfast menu? (Decide on your choice the night before.)				

## B Traveler's Guide

### Bed& Breakfast Checklist

	Yes	No	N/A	Notes
I know what is served for breakfast and have found out if alternatives/choices can be made.				

### Friend/Relative Lodging Checklist

	Yes	No	N/A	Notes
I will be assertive and communicate my needs prior to arriving.				
I will offer to go grocery shopping and/or help with the cooking.				
I will leave a hostess gift as a token of my appreciation for understanding my needs.				

### Exercise Checklist

	Yes	No	N/A	Notes
I have asked about exercises facilities in the area.				
I have asked about walking in the area.				
I have remembered appropriate exercise gear: bathing suit, tennis shoes, athletic socks, exercise clothing, music headset, etc.				

### Rewards for Successful

	Yes	No	N/A	Notes
I will reward myself for all my successful efforts when I return from my trip.				
I have made plans to allow myself time to relax.				

use agreement with a nearby health club. If you belong to a fitness center or racquet club, ask if there are affiliated clubs that offer reciprocity agreements in the city you plan to visit.

- Turn the environment into a fitness zone. Be flexible and creative. Hotel halls can make safe, convenient walking tracks. Walk the halls while you explore the hotel facilities. Walk laps around an empty conference hall or ballroom. Take the stairs instead of the elevator.
- Ask the hotel concierge to recommend a safe walking place in the area. A nearby mall can be a good place to walk, especially in colder climates, very hot humid weather, or early in the morning and after dark.

## Defensive Dining

- Purchase a guide to dining out that reviews categories of different restaurants, ranging from fast food to family meal establishments. Many will list portions, calories, and fat grams. The more you know, the more prepared you can be when you order. One excellent resource is the book, *Dr. Jo's Dining Lean (how to eat healthy when you're not at home)* by Joanne Lichten, RD, PhD.

- Use online restaurant guides to preview menus in the city you will be visiting.

- Rehearse polite resistance. Be sure to rehearse how you will resist pressures to have a drink, a dessert, or other food that you haven't planned on eating.

- Know how to optimize a pre-ordered meal. Nancy and her husband have made travel their hobby since retiring 14 years ago. Nancy has maintained a 25 pound weight loss by developing a portable health routine. "We use the same sensible habits we use at home. If I don't have a choice of what I'm served, I eat half portions of everything. If something looks really fattening, I may try only a fork full. I also scrape sauces off meats, use minimal dressing, skip the bread, and limit myself to half a dessert once a day. And I ask to have my plate cleared away early. We walk 30 to 40 minutes a day in addition to any tours we take."

## be prepared

Before ordering, consult the experts. One is Dr. Jo's Dining Lean (how to eat healthy when you're not at home) by Joanne Lichten, RD, PhD.

- Know how to make the best of a buffet:
  - Walk the length of the buffet before selecting any foods. Then go to the end of the line and grab a plate once you know what your choices will be.
  - Take only one plate. Put all of your food, including salad, entrée, and dessert, all on one plate. This way you can see how much food you are eating for the whole meal.
  - Make only one trip through the line.
  - Walk ahead of people who may encourage you to "take a taste" of items you don't want. They will move slowly as they select a variety of items. By walking ahead, you can stay focused on your choices and move quickly, avoiding temptation.
- Seek out dining companions who will support your success. Try to sit next to someone who you know eats in moderation.
- Match your eating pace to the slowest eater. You'll be amazed at how full you feel when you've slowly eaten less.
- Find room for regional specialties. Few people want to miss Creole cuisine in New Orleans, fried soft-shelled crab in Baltimore, Tex-Mex in San Antonio, or a fine restaurant in New York City. Before dining in these places, you may want to try some of these ideas:

- Ask for smaller-sized portions of the regional favorite, or order from the appetizer menu if possible.

- Choose two or three foods you really want to sample. Ask that the rest of the items be left off your

plate. Substitute a salad or other vegetables in their place as a way to attain some calorie balance.

- Bank some of your calories by slightly cutting your calorie intake and increasing your activity for a few days before and after your trip. Be careful not to cut back so much you are famished when you walk into the restaurant. If you do, you may find you are too hungry to follow through with your plan for a healthy meal.

- Consider using OPTIFAST® meal replacements as a way to ensure the rest of the day's calories are maintained at a more constant level.
- Look for restaurants that offer:
  - A varied menu, including a variety of entrees and preparation styles.
  - The option to order a la carte.
  - Food prepared to order.
  - Familiarity. Eating in a restaurant you have frequented before can give you a sense of security. You know the menu, the serving sizes, and whether extras, like rolls, are served.
- Use self-monitoring tools like food and activity diaries, as well as a pedometer to help you track your behaviors. Diaries are available in paper and in electronic versions that can be carried on a PDA (e.g. a Palm Pilot) or on a laptop computer. If you will be away for an extended time, you may wish to send these diaries to an OPTIFAST® Program staff member and have follow-up phone conferences or use email.

## Tricks Of The Travel Trade

- Choose carry-on luggage with built-in wheels so it's easy to walk while you wait.
- Wear athletic shoes during transit. It encourages you to take a walk between flights or to walk between terminals if you have the time.
- Pack a supply of OPTIFAST® meal replacements in the outer pockets of your carry-on luggage. If you get caught without a balanced meal, you always have an option.
- Eat before heading to the airport — even if it's 4:30 a.m.
- Refuse the mini-bar key at your hotel.
- Carry your own suitcases to your room, when practical.

## key goals

Using the tips in this module, develop 2 – 3 goals to work towards.

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