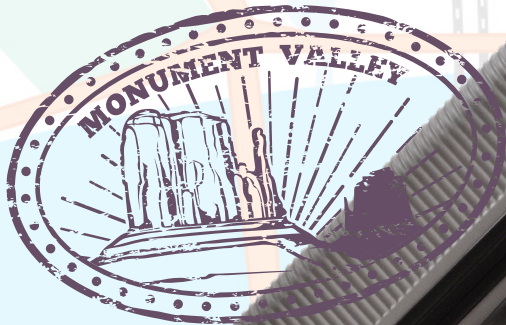


# Staying Healthy While Traveling

*by Sarah Muntel, RD*



It's time to go on a vacation! Summertime is a popular season for travel, and vacations are a wonderful way to unwind, discover new places, and spend time with family and friends. Taking a break from your daily routine is really important. When you return, you'll feel refreshed and ready for the next things you need to do! As you pack your bags and plan your trip, remember to stay focused on your health and wellness goals. With a bit of planning, it's not hard to stay active, eat well, and have a great time during your vacation.







## Do Your Research and Plan Ahead

Keeping yourself on track during a vacation might feel like an impossible challenge. However, with the right preparation, it's entirely achievable. Before you leave, take some time to plan your vacation. Look for ways to include health and nutrition in your itinerary, such as trying new activities and foods. You'll be pleasantly surprised to find that many places have great options for staying healthy.



## Check your Nutrition

Instead of constantly eating sweets, fried foods and junk, seek out healthier alternatives. Choosing nutritious foods while traveling has many advantages. First, eating healthy will give you more energy, which is important for having a fun vacation. Second, sticking to your plan will give you a sense of accomplishment and satisfaction. Here are some tips to help you choose wisely and prioritize your well-being.

- Consider using grocery delivery services. You can shop online from home and have meals and snacks delivered to your hotel. Just make sure your room has a refrigerator. This way, you won't have to search for a store and can avoid the temptation of unhealthy vacation treats. You can stock up on fresh produce, cheese sticks, popcorn and protein bars to keep in your hotel room.
- Make eating out fun by finding new restaurants to try at your destination. Take a moment to look up their menus online and come up with a plan. You can plan to try fresh fish at a local beach restaurant, visit a steakhouse and choose a lean cut of meat with a side salad, or enjoy chicken fajitas at a Mexican restaurant.
- Remember to give yourself a break. It's okay to indulge in a special meal or snack during your vacation. One treat doesn't mean the whole day is ruined. Just get back on track with your healthy eating at the next meal.



## Finding Fitness

Discovering fun fitness activities can help you build a habit that you'll want to continue. When you're on vacation, make it a point to set aside time to move your body. This will not only increase your energy levels but also make you feel positive and satisfied about being active. Be creative and think outside the box to come up with exciting ideas to stay active during your vacation!

- Try to find ways to move throughout the day. Look for trails in a local park, a gym at your hotel, or join an exercise class for the day. Keep things interesting by varying your activities and trying something new.
- Involve the whole family in staying active. Rent bikes for an afternoon, plan a walk after dinner, or try something different like surfing! You can also let your kids choose an activity. You might be surprised to hear what ideas they have!







## Mind Your Mental Health

Vacations are meant to be relaxing and a chance to recharge. Make sure you have a vacation that helps you rest and rejuvenate! Sometimes it's easy to plan too many activities and take on too many commitments. Take a moment to find balance between fun and fitness.

- Pack items you enjoy. Bring your favorite books, puzzles, music, or whatever you love to ensure you have time to do just that. Sneaking away for a few minutes can give you time to spend on your favorite things.
- Remember to rest. Vacations can be full of exciting things, but it's also important to take it easy. Take an afternoon nap or find some quiet time alone to recharge.
- Include activities that you enjoy. Vacations offer a lot of things to do, so make sure you have activities that you personally enjoy along with the rest of the family.



## HOW TO: Make it Through a Long Day of Travel

Whether you're taking a road trip for a few hours or a plane across the U.S., travel days require some planning. Here are some tips to make your trip easier.

- Pack a snack bag for long road trips or airport days. When in the car, consider bringing a cooler with water to avoid sugary snacks at the gas stations. Pack fresh fruits, vegetables, water, cheese and meats. Include snacks like popcorn, pretzels or whole-grain crackers. Airline travel can be more challenging, but you can pack snacks such as protein bars, trail mix or popcorn in your carry-on. Bring a refillable water bottle to stay hydrated throughout the day!
- Find ways to walk, even on your busiest travel day. If you're driving, take quick 10-15-minute walks every couple of hours. It will not only give you some cardio exercise but also reduce stress and improve your mood during long car rides. If you're stuck in an airport, walk up and down the terminal while you wait.
- Bring items like books, adult coloring books or knitting supplies to keep busy and reduce screen time. This can be a great opportunity to explore a new hobby and let your creative juices flow.





## HOW TO:

# Make Healthy Food Choices When Eating Out

Making healthy food choices while eating out on vacation can be challenging.

- Instead of donuts and pastries for breakfast, go for high-protein items like eggs, turkey sausage, turkey bacon, oats and whole-grain toast. Ask for fresh fruit or low-fat yogurt on the side to make breakfast even more nutritious.
- Restaurant portions can be large. If someone in your group is willing to split a meal, that can be an easy solution. Since you might not have enough space to take leftovers with you, you may have to leave some behind.
- When looking at the lunch or dinner menu, choose grilled, baked or boiled options. This can save you a lot of calories and fat. Be mindful of side dishes, as they can add up quickly. Consider swapping a high-calorie side item for a side salad, fruit or vegetables.
- Desserts can be tempting, but plan ahead if you want to order one. Choose a lower-calorie meal to balance it out. You can also share the dessert with others at your table to enjoy a smaller portion.

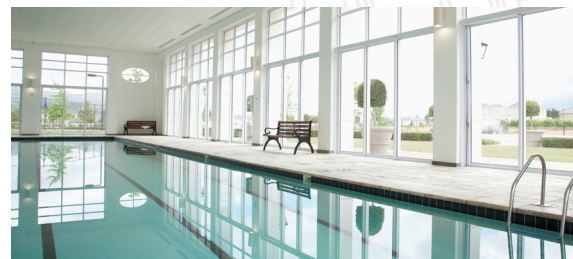


## HOW TO:

# Deal With an unexpected change of plans

We've all been there. Your perfectly planned vacation goes sideways. How do you make the most of these days? It can be easy to throw in the towel, but always be ready with a backup plan.

- The weather can change unexpectedly. A rainy day might ruin your beach or mountain hike plans. Take on the challenge and find new ways to have fun. Look for an indoor pool or an activity center to keep working towards your goals!
- Your carefully chosen restaurant may not have healthy options, or your grocery store delivery might be late. Don't give up; just adapt and make a new decision. Make the best choice you can and move on to the next meal. It's okay if it's not perfect!
- Sometimes your perfectly planned day doesn't go as expected. Kids may start fighting during a trip to the park, or someone might get sick on vacation. Focus on the positive moments and enjoy the time you have.



Wherever you go on your summer vacation, make sure to enjoy the break, relaxation and adventure. Taking time away from your usual routine can be amazing, and keeping up with your health and fitness goals can make your vacation even better.

### **About the Author:**

*Sarah Muntel, RD, is a Registered Dietitian with over 20 years of experience working with surgical and medical weight-loss patients. She is passionate about helping people reach their health and wellness goals. In her free time, Sarah enjoys spending time with her husband and children, watching her children's activities, and going on walks with friends.*





# ABOUT THE OBESITY ACTION COALITION (OAC)

The Obesity Action Coalition (OAC) is a National non-profit organization dedicated to giving a voice to individuals affected by obesity and helping them along their journey toward better health. Our core focuses are to elevate the conversation of weight and its impact on health, improve access to obesity care, provide science-based education on obesity and its treatments, and fight to eliminate weight bias and discrimination.



VIBRANT COMMUNITY



NATIONAL AWARENESS CAMPAIGNS



ANNUAL CONVENTION



ADVOCACY



PUBLIC EDUCATION

## LEARN, CONNECT, ENGAGE

The OAC knows that the journey with weight can be challenging but we also know that great things happen when we learn, connect and engage. That is why the OAC Community exists. Our Community is designed to provide quality education, ongoing support programs, an opportunity to connect, and a place to take action on important issues.

### Through the OAC Community, you can get access to:

- Weight & Health Education • Community Blogs
  - Community Discussion Forum
  - Ongoing Support • Meaningful Connections
- AND MUCH MORE**



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