

# YOU'VE ARRIVED!

## Enjoying Your Vacation with Parkinson's

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Travelling can be an exhilarating experience; travel can also be a nightmare if you aren't prepared. Once all the stops have been made and you are safely conveyed onto your holiday location, you may ask yourself: how do I relax and enjoy myself with Parkinson's? How do I ensure I am taking the best care of myself and my PD? Sometimes it is helpful to take a day to recover from a long journey. Remember, you know yourself best. Giving yourself time to adjust in a new setting will allow your body and mind to relax and readjust to new schedules, time zones, and activities.

**Upon your arrival at the Hotel**, asking destination staff to help you with luggage transport by obtaining a luggage dolly, locating the closest elevators, bathrooms, exits and wheelchair accessible areas will make the initial period of getting settled easier and faster. Experienced travelers will often make copies of their documents before leaving home including, Passports, Identification, insurance, medications, medical information, that they take during excursions away from the Hotel.

Asking destination staff for use of an in-room safe if available; utilizing a safe will ensure all your original documents, passports, money, credit cards and emergency contact and medical information remain secure.

Most Hotels will have adaptive shower seats available for the asking, never hesitate to make requests about things you need to assist you in your daily routines.

Preparing your new surrounding for a safe night is key to feeling comfortable. Bringing a small nightlight from home can make those late-night trips to the bathroom easier to navigate. Sleeping in a new environment may require that you ask for additional pillows if you sleep with your head elevated. It can also be challenging to sleep during periods where you would normally be awake, where you are in a time zone change. Maintaining a good sleep hygiene routine will be helpful, a few hours before bed, reduce sounds, light, and create a calming environment in which to settle, avoid drinks that stimulate the body and mind like caffeine and alcohol. Utilizing a sleep app may also help to calm the mind and body making a restful night achievable.

Many dining rooms are open for specific mealtime services. Making inquiries as to an earlier entry may assist where you require additional time to eat a meal. Pay special attention to dietary changes that could trigger gastro-intestinal issues such as diarrhea. Asking restaurant staff for less spicy varieties of foods, drinking only safe water and beverage sources and eating in destination approved venues may also help in avoiding upset stomach.

There are many factors to consider when making decisions about when to take your medications while travelling. These factors include time changes, storage of medications (e.g., refrigeration), dietary changes and available foods, sleep schedule changes, availability of a facility to access beverages, or food and hygiene supplies while you are out for the day/evening.

Once you have organized your "self-care routine" at your home away from home, you can now start to plan excursions. Here are some general recommendations for travelling with PD:

- » Pack a day bag, including a copy of your Passport/ identification, insurance documents and parking passes, carry minimal amounts of cash/travellers' cheques. Taking medications, food, beverages, a change of clothes, and alarm/timer for medications. For ease of management during your dining experience, take along any adaptive utensils, most restaurants will not have these tools available.
- » Taking an extra dose of medication with you in case you are waylaid.
- » Always let someone know where you are going.
- » Always check that medication alarms are programmed into your phone before leaving for the day, taking into account any time changes to accommodate.
- » Double check accessibility of location prior to arrival (e.g., wheelchair accessible, mobility equipment loaners and cost).
- » Pre-purchase tickets for events beforehand in order to avoid line-ups.
- » When arriving at a destination, know where restrooms are for ease of access.
- » Embrace the changes, give yourself permission to try new things fearlessly! Be open to whatever comes. If you need to rest, rest! It's ok to put yourself first.
- » Communicate your needs to those around you clearly and without apologies.



Travelling is a wonderful way to experience different cultures. It's also a wonderful way to learn more about, "who you are." Parkinson Disease is a part of you, it does not make up the "whole" of you. Recognizing your limits is crucial in making any trip away from home successful. Trusting that in making the preparations you do before you leave your location, you are safe to enjoy the unfolding adventure you have undertaken.

Bon voyage, Arrivederci, Adios, So long!!!