8 IBS-Friendly Travel Tips

by EMMI SCOTT

Traveling With IBS

Traveling to a new place or to visit loved ones is often a fun experience. However, traveling with IBS, or irritable bowel syndrome, can be tricky. Fortunately, a little planning before your trip can go a long way. In order to keep traveling fun and comfortable, try these tips.

1. Prepare With Stress Relief

All of the extra details that come with traveling can make a trip stressful, and stress often triggers IBS symptoms. In order to avoid this scenario, practice different stress relief techniques.

You might try meditating or a mindfulness exercise while preparing to travel. You can also visualize how your trip will go if everything runs smoothly. This may help to ease any anxiety you have about traveling.

You can download meditations or soothing music on your phone to listen to while traveling. You may also want to bring essential oils for IBS for some on-the-go aromatherapy. Scents like lavender, bergamot and ylang ylang are considered calming.

2. Keep Medications and Supplements With You

In case your luggage gets misplaced or doesn't make it on your flight, keep important IBS medications and supplements in your carryon bag.

This way, even if you have to buy a new outfit or some toiletries, you won't be left without the medications that help you live comfortably every day.

3. Plan Rest Stops

If you are on a road trip, it may bring you peace of mind to know where you can stop to go to the bathroom. This is especially helpful if you have diarrhea frequently.

4. Inform Hosts of Dietary Restrictions

If you are staying with friends and relatives, make sure to let them know if you have any dietary restrictions.

Some people with IBS find this difficult because they don't want to seem needy and talking about IBS may feel embarrassing.

However, informing your hosts about your needs will allow them to fully prepare for your visit. If someone has

invited you to stay with them, it is highly likely that they want you to feel comfortable while you are in their home.

5. Research Restaurants

You may eat out more often when traveling. If you manage your IBS symptoms through a restricted diet, visiting unfamiliar restaurants can be difficult.

You can avoid stress when choosing a restaurant by researching area eateries before your trip.

An internet search for a specific dietary restriction, like gluten-free or vegan, with the name of the city that you are visiting should bring up plenty of options.

You can also search for the most popular restaurants at your destination and browse their menus online for dishes that will work for you.

When you find restaurants that have what you need, add them to a list on your phone or in your planner.

This will be helpful for when you are already out and about and start to get hungry. Already knowing what your options are can help you avoid stressful decision-making that can further be complicated by low blood sugar.

6. Bring Snacks

It pays to be prepared when traveling, as you never know what complications might arise. Your flight might get delayed, you could have a flat tire, or the restaurant you planned on trying for lunch might be closed.

In case you are also hungry when an inconvenience occurs, it is a good idea to have snacks with you. This way, you will know that you have something to eat that won't trigger your IBS symptoms.

You won't have to rely on whatever you can find at an airport newsstand. A snack can give you enough energy to figure out a good place to get your next meal.

7. Find a Nearby Grocery Store

Eating rich, fatty foods can trigger IBS symptoms, and restaurants tend to serve richer meals than those made at home.

So, when you are traveling, it can be helpful to have an alternative to eating out so that your digestive system doesn't get overwhelmed.

Finding a grocery store near where you are staying will give you increased food options on your trip. You can buy fresh, unprocessed foods that are less likely to have ingredients that will trigger IBS symptoms.

You can also shop for an easy meal to keep on hand in the mini fridge at your hotel. The grocery store is a great place to refill on snacks so that you never run out.

8. Pack an Emergency IBS Kit

An emergency IBS kit can come in handy if digestive discomfort comes up during your trip.

Think about the things you would use at home if your IBS symptoms flared up, and pack a small amount of them in a toiletry case or zip lock bag so that it is easy to carry with you.

You may consider including tea, mouthwash, ginger chews and digestive bitters in your emergency IBS kit. This is also a great place to keep any medications or supplements that you will need to pack for your trip.

Peace of Mind

While all of these preparations are extra work, making arrangements ahead of time can help you avoid triggering your IBS symptoms while traveling. That way, you can have peace of mind and enjoy your trip.