

Travel & Events
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LLC
Travel that fits you to a "T.E.E."[®]

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30-Year Columbia Resident!



Ten P's Handouts

- For traveling with pain, let's learn how to:
 1. Pick
 2. Plan
 3. Prepare
 4. Pack; and
 5. Position Yourself

PICK: ~Avoid certain airlines and embrace others to minimize stress. Spirit, Frontier, Allegiant are the Ultra Low Cost Carriers with ala cart services for everything. They also do not fly frequent flights daily from airports so if your flights gets delayed or canceled, it is much harder to reschedule your flight and ensure it will also be non-stop.

~Ensure your travel professional requests the need of wheelchair assistance so that you can pre-board the plane before general boarding which allows you to pick the seats you want to sit in for your comfort if flying Southwest. If flying other airlines, ensure that you do not purchase the cheapest base fares which do not let you choose your seat in advance. You will be left with what they assign you.

~Seats are important to manage pain. Visit www.seatguru.com to help you select the best type of seat for your flight. If your flight is long, you may want to consider Coach Plus or Business Class.

~Pre-Request Wheelchair/Luggage Assistants & tip them a minimum of \$5.00 at each airport.

~Plan to arrive early and give yourself more time to arrive to departure airports, cruise ports or train stations.

~Consider flying on the actual holiday which often has fewer people traveling that day.

~Go online and familiarize yourself with the layout of the airport, restrooms, more comfortable airport lounges, business or first class.

~Check your credit cards as some offer discounted access fees or complimentary fees to airport lounges like certain American Express Cards.

~Reserve the right-sized car rental vehicle in advance with amenities and extra equipment you need such as a wheelchair lift, more space, GPS, etc. Certain destinations have a car rental shortage.

~Take your handicap placard and MD EZ Drive Toll Transponder to avoid long toll lines.

The goal is to minimize stress to reduce pain. Preset your routes into your phone GPS from airport to the accommodations and back. Plan to travel during the day if traveling to a place you've never been to. Avoid nighttime driving especially if pain is more prevalent at night.

PLAN: Try to plan destinations that are friendly to the body. If your body locks up in the cold, try to avoid traveling to colder destinations. If you have a medical condition such as lupus, you may want to avoid the sun – drenched destinations or at least have an umbrella and visor to shield your face and long sleeves and pants to cover exposed skin.

~Invest in a good, breathable, wrinkle proof leisure wear travel outfits. Also look into long sleeved, long legged swim suits with high necks to avoid sun over exposure.

~If you have specific dietary needs, it is best to plan accordingly by either bringing your own food that you can eat, or order from a place which can prepare food unique to you.

PREPARE: Arrange accessible or medical services, e.g. beach- wheelchairs, beach loungers with taller legs, or ask if there is a wide wooden path to get down to beach. Visit my ADA-partner Accessible Needs at Sea: <https://www.specialneedsatsea.com/quote/> which also provides equipment for non-cruise needs depending on the destination.

PACK: Accessible lightweight equipment such as stretch bands, yoga straps, Excel List of Diagnoses and Prescriptions, plenty of sunscreen and caps/visors. If you are prone to noise, pack earplugs or noise canceling headphones, and UV sunglasses if sensitive to the sun.

POSITION: Hotels and Resorts: Select ADA rooms in the US, or internationally, request wheelchair or lower level/first floor rooms to avoid use or need of elevators or stairs, or at minimum has ramps.

~Book the room category that you know will provide for your needs. Don't wait until check in and try to get upgraded. Too much Covid-19 demand for that.

~Try to arrive as close to check in as possible to avoid the hotel overbooking and having to walk those who arrive very late.

~I suggest swim out rooms with access to your own pool for stretching and exercise while being secluded away from lots of people until Covid-19 is completely handled.

~Some hotel services have been significantly modified or not offered. Ensure you identify which needs may be closed or on reduced hours such as a pool, dining, etc.

~Consider the closeness to airports, train stations, etc. to avoid long airport transfers in cars or vans.

- Overcome the barriers that prevent your confidence in traveling with:
 1. Prescriptions
 2. People
 3. Places
 4. Pausing
 5. Patience

PRESCRIPTIONS: Ensure you have requested all refills of your prescriptions at least two weeks before your travel. Bring enough for a week or two after your expected return just in case you need to extend your trip.

~Make sure to prescribe R&R time. If you do something rigorous, perhaps plan for a spa or massage appointment.

PEOPLE: Communicate clearly with the people in your inner circle who will help you plan your travel such as a skilled travel professional, destination tourism boards which are chock full of searchable low impact activities, accessible activities and events. You can also search by places that do not have a lot of people what are more quiet like museums, historic libraries, art galleries, etc.

It is super important to use a skilled travel professional which will run point for you to minimize stress if flights gets changed or canceled, or if natural disasters or terrorism occurs. We are trained in repatriation, lost passport and visa guidance, and most importantly is to ensure you purchase travel protection and in-country Covid-19 insurance which covers the cost of your medical coverage, extra nights of accommodations and meals, etc. should a traveler contract Covid-19 before departure. Often your stateside medical insurance won't cover occurrences outside the US so please check.

PLACES: Start small and slow, to get acclimated to traveling. Build up to what your can tolerate. Allow flexibility. Here is a great article on suggestions due the adventurous: <https://scootaround.com/en/13-of-the-most-wheelchair-accessible-travel-destinations> and <https://enablingdevices.com/blog/best-vacation-spots-handicap-access/>

PAUSING: Avoid over scheduling with tours and activities. Build in rest time, take a pause. It is ok to do absolutely nothing. Communicate to those around you that you need to pause.

PATIENCE: Please be patient with yourself, especially if you've never traveled before. Be willing to pay a little more for your comfort.

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