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| **Jet Lag: The Traveler Hangover** |
| Many travelers face the inconvenience of feeling worn out or suffer from insomnia or forgetfulness after traveling across time zones. These are symptoms of jet lag.  Travelers who fly through different time zones are at risk for this temporary condition that occurs when the body adjusts to changes in light, temperature and climate. Your biological clocks help regulate your sleep/wake cycle and your body temperature.  “When you cross multiple time zones, your biological clocks get out of synch with our environment,” said Dr. Robert Quigley, Regional Medical Director, Americas Region, International SOS. “The body reacts. We become fatigued, disoriented and suffer broken sleeping patterns. Jet lag can also cause irritability, difficulty concentrating and inability to make decisions.”  Many people say that jet lag lasts one day per hour of time change. Although most travelers recover within three days, it can take up to a week to re-adjust after flights involving significant time changes.  **Prevention**  If practical, fly from east to west. This causes less jet lag than flying from west to east. No matter which direction you're traveling, take these steps.  Before departure:   * Adjust your meal and sleep times to your destination's time zone. * Get plenty of exercise several days before departure. * Get a full night's sleep the day before travel.   During the flight:   * Drink plenty of water to combat dehydration. * Limit alcohol and caffeine consumption, since these contribute to dehydration. * Dress comfortably. Wear loose clothing and slippers (or very comfortable shoes). Consider layering clothing so you can take items off or put more on depending on the cabin temperature. * Get out of your seat and walk around often. * Do stretching exercises in your seat to reduce swelling in the legs and feet. * Change your watch, cell phone and other devices so the time displayed is the current time at your destination. * If it is nighttime at your destination, try to sleep for long stretches on the plane. * If you have a stopover, get out and walk. If possible, take a shower to help get the muscles loose and blood flowing.   Upon arrival:   * Light exposure is important. If it is daytime, make sure you can see the morning or afternoon light to help your body adjust. Daylight is a key factor in adjusting to a new time zone. * Limit your first day's activities. * Try not to sleep until it is nighttime at your destination. * Relax and adjust your meal times and other activities to those of your destination as soon as possible.   **Medications**  You may choose to ask your doctor for a short-acting sleeping tablet to cope with insomnia upon arrival. Do not take these for more than three to four nights. Over-the-counter sleep aids may also effectively cause drowsiness. Melatonin can be helpful but should only be used short-term on an occasional basis. Consult your doctor before use. |

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