

Travel Tips

HOLIDAYING WITH ELDERLY LOVED ONES



Valuable tips and information
to prepare you for a holiday
with your elderly loved ones!

BY  **ntuc**
Health



Introduction

As borders open around the world, many of us are looking forward to a long-awaited getaway with our families. If you are planning an itinerary that is safe, suitable and enjoyable for elderly parents who are holidaying with you, keep reading for important travel tips and recommendations.



Section 1:

*What to look out for
in a travel destination*

- 01** Access to places of interest
- 02** Intensity level of activities
- 03** Health facilities

*Equip yourself with valuable tips
and information to get you all
prepared for a safe and enjoyable
trip the next time you travel.*

Chapter 1: Access to places of interest

One of the first things to think about is whether you will be able to get around easily between tourist attractions.



Check this out!

- Easy access at every train station in Osaka, along with wheelchair ramps at most establishments, and attractions to cater to elderlies.
- Safety is not an issue as locals are friendly and will always be willing to lend a helping hand to you.

If your loved one has a condition that affects their mobility, sight or hearing, look for places of attraction that have options for people with disabilities.

Or if your elderly loved one cannot walk for long distances, you may want to consider chartering private transport or look for reliable public transport options. Plan a route with apps like Google Maps to ensure that your family can make the most of their time there!

Chapter 2: Intensity level of activities

Some seniors travel leisurely as a way to enjoy their retirement years. There are also those who travel for the thrill and excitement of adventures found off the beaten path!

Regardless of the group that your loved ones belong to, plan for activities that are suitable for their fitness levels. Keep in mind that certain activities such as intense hiking for long distances may not be suitable for older folks due to reduced cardiovascular endurance or wear and tear in joints.

Older persons who are physically fit and are up for an adventure can continue to engage in adventurous activities but consider tailoring the intensity of the activity, arranging for more breaks and ensuring appropriate footwear and clothing.



Check this out!

- Stroll along heritage trails in Melaka, Malaysia
- Join a guided tour in Halong Bay, Vietnam
- Pet an alpaca in Khao Yai, Thailand



Chapter 3: *Health facilities*

While holidays are all about fun, do cater for the unexpected. For instance, in the event of emergencies such as serious falls, strokes or heart attacks, you would want to make sure that you and your loved ones can get medical attention on time.

Note the nearest hospitals before you set out on your trip and keep important telephone numbers handy.

Section 2:

*How your elderly loved ones
can better prepare for a trip*

- 01** Packing the essentials
- 02** Consult a doctor before travelling
- 03** Do proper research
- 04** Travel Insurance



Chapter 2: Packing the essentials

The key to a worry-free trip is to be adequately packed, don't miss out on essential items but not overpack as well. Prepare a checklist for your elderly loved ones a month before departure, listing down items required for the chosen itineraries.



Pack the essentials, such as a first aid kit containing personal medication such as those for high blood pressure, diabetes and other chronic conditions.



Prepare warmer clothing and accessories such as gloves, scarves and hats as seniors may require more clothing to keep warm.



Bring along travel gear such as a pair of sturdy walking shoes, walking aides and trekking poles when walking for long distances or trekking on uneven terrain.



Include umbrellas, hats or raincoats to keep your loved ones protected from uncertain weather.



Prepare sunscreen, moisturisers and insect repellent to prevent any discomfort from skin irritation or insect bites.



Keep important documents such as passports, tickets and visas in a folder for your loved ones to access easily at airports.



Prepare an emergency contact list with your family's contact details in the event of emergencies.

Chapter 2: *Consult a doctor before travelling*

While your loved ones may feel fine and excited for the upcoming plans, it is best to consult a doctor before heading abroad. A pre-departure health screening can help assess if your loved one is fit for travel.

Speak to a family doctor to replenish any medication prescriptions and provide necessary vaccinations, ideally 2 weeks before travelling. You may also share the itinerary with the doctor so that they can provide you with pre-travel advice.



*Consult a doctor and
schedule a pre-
departure screening to
ensure that your loved
one is fit for travel!*





If you have any pre-existing medical conditions diagnosed by a doctor previously:

- Share information such as your current health conditions and medication dosage, if any with your doctor during the screening
- Check the supply of your medication and replenish them with additional servings before your trip
- Highlight your travel itineraries to your doctor as they can advise you on destinations to avoid based on your current health conditions.

“At our Family Medicine Clinic, our team of doctors offer a full suite of services from consultation to vaccinations and health screenings. They can provide pre and post-travel advice, allowing you to travel with peace of mind.”

Chapter 3: Do proper research

With the thrill and excitement, it is easy to miss out on information that may be crucial while on your trip. Many tend to neglect the research process which is fundamental for safe travel, especially so for seniors. Proper research allows you and your loved ones to be familiar with the environment which keeps you calm under all circumstances, allowing for informed decisions to be made. Unfamiliarity in a foreign country can cause anxiety and feelings of helplessness.

Research the following list of items and share the information with your loved ones for greater peace of mind:



- Local food and culture
- Amenities near your hotel
- Transportation options within the area
- Nearby medical facilities and police stations
- Location of [Singapore's Embassy](#) in the country you are visiting
- [Travel insurance](#) to provide coverage for flight delays, damaged or lost luggage, medical emergencies
- Local COVID-19 regulations

Chapter 4: Travel insurance

Never overlook the importance of travel insurance as you never know when it could become a lifesaver.

Travel insurance provides you with peace of mind in the event of unforeseen circumstances which result in any possible financial losses before or during your trip.

Being insured with insurance covers you financially in the event where:

- Airline flights are delayed, cancelled or diverted
- Baggages are damaged or misplaced during the trip
- Items or valuables are stolen or robbed
- Costly medical and hospitalisation bills are incurred
- Post-trip medical treatments are required

Travel coverage offered by insurance companies may differ and can come in various packages at different price points.

Be sure to check out all available options and select one that suits your needs based on the destinations.



Section 3:

*Things to take note
of when abroad*

- 01** Personal Safety
- 02** Safeguard your belongings
- 03** Stay updated with local news



Chapter 1: Personal safety

Apart from having fun and enjoying your vacation, personal safety is paramount. It is advisable for seniors to travel with companions who can keep a lookout for any safety hazards.

Travelers are prone to hazards as they are unfamiliar with their surroundings and are not accustomed to local practices. Safety hazards can come in various forms and it is easy to miss them when one is not alert and careful.



Stay out of harm's way by looking out for safety hazards when overseas:

- Be aware of local traffic rules as traffic accidents are one of the most common causes of death in travellers
 - Be wary of the hygiene of food and drinks purchased from food stores with poor hygiene practices
 - Avoid any protests and demonstrations even if it is peaceful as there are chances of them turning violent
 - Stay alert to any deals or bargains that seem too good to be true and not fall victim to scams
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Chapter 2: Safeguard your belongings

The elderly are also often more vulnerable to being targeted by pickpockets. Remind your loved ones to always be aware of their surroundings and lookout for their belongings.

If you or your loved ones do find yourself in a dangerous situation, do not hesitate to ask for help. Approach a police officer or security guard for assistance and make your way to the nearest police station to lodge a report once it is safe to do so.



Some tips to keep your belongings safe:

- Using anti-theft backpacks and accessories to safeguard valuables
- Storing excess cash and travel documents in a safe deposit at your place of accommodation
- Keep your bag and wallet in front of you at all times

Chapter 3: Stay updated with local news

Staying informed of local news can make a huge difference to your travel experience. You and your loved ones can plan your itineraries and activities to adapt to unexpected events or unforeseen weather conditions based on local news.

Not only staying informed assist you and your loved ones in planning, it ensures your safety as well by avoiding areas or locations with potential threats and dangers caused by natural or human activities. Being aware of daily happenings can make your trip safer and more pleasant.



Get news updates only from credible sources and pay special attention to:

- Daily crimes and accidents
- Disruptions to transportation
- Ongoing demonstrations and protests
- Severe weather conditions
- Natural environmental hazards

Visit our Family Medicine Clinic to see our doctors for pre-travel advice, vaccinations and medication to travel with a peace of mind!

Seniors who want to make the most out of their trips can also check out our Active Ageing fitness services to get fit and ready for their next big adventure!



For more information on NTUC Health services, please visit <https://ntuhealth.sg/> or follow @NTUCHealth on Facebook and Instagram.



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