

Hitting The Road With Your Elderly Loved One

Summer is a traditional vacation time. "Hitting the Road" on a summer vacation with your elderly loved one can be one of the best times of being a family caregiver or friend. However, traveling with elderly loved ones may present unanticipated challenges. As with any other vacation, preparation and planning ahead is key. Planning out in advance the logistics and considering all of the little things can make or break a trip. Following are several tips that can help to ensure a smooth trip for someone who has limited mobility or health concerns:

- Consult with a physician for travel approval of your loved one.
- Be realistic. It is important to think about how easily an older person will tire, or how much assistance they may need in the bathroom or getting up and down from seats. Or, what method of travel would be best, such as a flight versus traveling by car. Plan a schedule that accommodates your loved one, a predictable schedule can be critical to reducing stress or anxiety.
- Prepare all necessary identification and documentation. This includes passports, driver's license, travel tickets, itineraries, medical documentation (such as Medicare and insurance cards, prescriptions/ physician statements, contact information, and brief medical history). Make multiple copies of the identification information in the event the originals get lost. Research medical facilities at your destination in advance so you are aware of the options.

- If you are flying: Get to the airport early to avoid unnecessary stress and anxiety. Know rules, regulations and screening procedures. Keep in mind that older individuals in wheel chairs are not immune to security procedure. Brief your loved one in advance about what to expect when going through security checkpoints. Be aware of medical conditions that may set off an alarm such as surgical hip or knee implants. Arrange for transportation inside the airport. Call ahead to make reservations for a motorized cart ride to transport you around the airport. Cost free wheelchair service is available at every airport origination, connection and arrival location. Special dietary needs can be also be accommodated in advance when booking tickets. All medications should be packed in a carry-on bag in approved bag containers (such as a clear plastic bag) for easy retrieval. This includes all prescription information and supplies needed to take the medication. If luggage is lost or damaged, at least you will still have your medication on hand. Arrange for special services in advance. Requests can be made for seat assignments in the rows designated for disabled travelers.
- Consider comfort in planning. Think about items that might make the trip more comfortable, such as comfortable clothing that doesn't restrict movement. Loose clothing also reduces the risk of blood clots when sitting or standing for long periods of time. Compression stockings can also



help stimulate circulation in the legs on long flights. A neck pillow, light sweater, reading material or snacks are other items that may help to make the trip more comfortable. Pack essential items in a bag that is easily accessible in the car or in a carry-on if flying.

- Stop & stretch to reduce the risk of blood clots. If you are on a road trip, take time to stop at a rest area to get out and move around. If flying, encourage your loved one to stretch or move their legs and arms or take a walk down the aisle.
- Hydrate, hydrate, hydrate. Proper hydration is crucial at any time but it becomes more of a challenge during hot months when heat and humidity draw fluids out of the body. Keep in mind that drinking lots of water also helps with jet lag.

Travel can be a transformative and enjoyable experience. And, if you are traveling with elderly loved ones, it can be elevated to a different level. The key to having the best possible experience is planning and preparation. Once you arrive, relax and enjoy! Remember, the special time you are spending with your loved one may never come again. Happy travels!



Nancy Webre, MS, CMS
CEO/Owner, Geriatric Care Manager
Locally Owned & Operated Since 1982.
Professional Staff, Screened, Bonded,
Insured, RN Supervised, State Licensed

EVERGREEN
In-Home Care Services
Care for loved ones.
Comfort for all.
541-389-0006
www.evergreeninhome.com

Celebrating 35 years of serving our Central Oregon Community



EVERGREEN In-Home Care Services

Care for loved ones.
Comfort for all.

Hitting the Road with Your Elderly Loved One

Summer is a traditional vacation time. “Hitting the Road” on a summer vacation with your elderly loved one can be one of the best times of being a family caregiver or friend. However, traveling with elderly loved ones may present unanticipated challenges. As with any other vacation, preparation and planning ahead is key. Planning out in advance the logistics and considering all of the little things can make or break a trip. Following are several tips that can help to ensure a smooth trip for someone who has limited mobility or health concerns:

- Consult with a physician for travel approval of your loved one.
- Be realistic. It is important to think about how easily an older person will tire, or how much assistance they may need in the bathroom or getting up and down from seats. Or, what method of travel would be best, such as a flight versus traveling by car. Plan a schedule that accommodates your loved one, a predictable schedule can be critical to reducing stress or anxiety.
- Prepare all necessary identification and documentation. This includes passports, driver’s license, travel tickets, itineraries, medical documentation (such as Medicare and insurance cards, prescriptions/ physician statements, contact information, and brief medical history). Make multiple copies of the identification information in the event the originals get lost. Research medical facilities at your destination in advance so you are aware of the options.
- If you are flying: Get to the airport early to avoid unnecessary stress and anxiety. Know rules, regulations and screening procedures. Keep in mind that older individuals in wheel chairs are not immune to security procedure. Brief your loved one in advance about what to expect when going through security checkpoints. Be aware of medical conditions that may set off an alarm such as surgical hip or knee implants. Arrange for transportation inside the airport. Call ahead to make reservations for a motorized cart ride to transport you around the airport. Cost free wheelchair service is available at every airport origination, connection and arrival location. Special dietary needs can be also be accommodated in advance when booking tickets. All medications should be packed in a carry-on bag in approved bag containers (such as a clear plastic bag) for easy retrieval. This includes all prescription information and supplies needed to take the medication. If luggage is lost or damaged, at least you will still have your medication on hand. Arrange for special services in advance. Requests can be made for seat assignments in the rows designated for disabled travelers.
- Consider comfort in planning. Think about items that might make the trip more comfortable, such as comfortable clothing that doesn’t restrict movement. Loose clothing also reduces the risk of blood clots when sitting or standing for long periods of time. Compression stockings can also help stimulate circulation in the legs on long flights. A neck pillow, light sweater, reading material or snacks are other items that may help to make the trip more comfortable. Pack essential items in a bag that is easily accessible in the car or in a carry-on if flying.

continued on next page



EVERGREEN
In-Home Care Services

Care for loved ones.
Comfort for all.

Hitting the Road with Your Elderly Loved One

continued from previous page

- Stop & stretch to reduce the risk of blood clots. If you are on a road trip, take time to stop at a rest area to get out and move around. If flying, encourage your loved one to stretch or move their legs and arms or take a walk down the aisle.
- Hydrate, hydrate, hydrate. Proper hydration is crucial at any time but it becomes more of a challenge during hot months when heat and humidity draw fluids out of the body. Keep in mind that drinking lots of water also helps with jet lag.

Travel can be a transformative and enjoyable experience. And, if you are traveling with elderly loved ones, it can be elevated to a different level. The key to having the best possible experience is planning and preparation. Once you arrive, relax and enjoy! Remember, the special time you are spending with your loved one may never come again. Happy travels!