

HEALTHY BREAK

Prep now and enjoy your getaway without worry.

Nothing spoils your plans for splashing in the Caribbean, scaling the Alps or strolling along the Seine like a stomach bug or a case of the dizzies. To take a well-deserved break free of health troubles, use these trip tips. —Leslie Goldman



See the sights (not the doctor) on your vacation!

GUARANTEE SMOOTH

SAILING Planes, trains and automobiles turn your tummy? Try Psi Bands. Worn on the Nei-Kuan acupressure point (two and a half finger widths below the mid-point of your wrist, on underside), the straps are FDA-approved for relief of motion sickness. \$15 to \$20 per pair; PsiBands.com

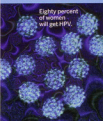


PUT YOUR BEST FOOT FORWARD Wear (or carry) socks for your shoeless walk through airport security. "You can pick up infections like plantar warts from the floor," warns Marlene Reid, D.P.M., a podiatrist in Westmont, Illinois.

Stay one step ahead of potential foot problems.

ENSURE YOUR HEALTH Pack needed meds in your carry-on in case of delays or lost luggage, advises Lea Lane, author of *Solo Traveler: Tales and Tips for Great Trips* (Fodor's). Consider purchasing medical and travel assistance: On Call International (OnCallInternational.com) offers access to a 24/7 medical help line staffed by English-speaking nurses.

The facts about the HPV vaccine



Eighty percent of women will get HPV.

Human papillomavirus (HPV) became a hot topic in 2006 when the FDA approved Gardasil, the first vaccine proven to provide nearly 100 percent protection against the four HPV strains responsible for more than 70 percent of cervical cancers and 90 percent of genital warts. But talk turned confusing as misinformation about

Gardasil's safety and efficacy quickly spread. Still not sure if the vaccine is right for you? Get the facts you need to make up your mind.

"I hear it wasn't tested enough."

FACT Gardasil was tested on more than 18,000 women over five years, one of the largest ever clinical studies for a vaccine. The shot protects against HPV for at least five years; it's not yet clear if it will wear off later. Yes, it stings more than other shots, but side effects like nausea and dizziness are similar to those of other vaccines, says Diane Harper, M.D., professor of obstetrics and gynecology at Dartmouth Medical School in Hanover, New Hampshire.

"It's just for young girls, right?"

FACT Though the shot was tested on and approved only for females ages 9 to 26, older women can still get and benefit from a vaccination, studies show. In fact, the FDA this year could approve Gardasil for women up to age 45 (and Cervarix, a new HPV vaccine still in trials, for women up to age 55).

"I have HPV, so it can't help me."

FACT This assumption is false, Dr. Harper says. There are more than 100 different strains of HPV. "Having one doesn't mean you can't get the others, and it's unlikely you've been exposed to all four types covered by the vaccine," she says.

"Why bother? Cervical cancer is easy to detect and treat."

FACT Most precancerous HPV infections can be detected through regular Pap smears, but screening can't catch all strains before they cause cervical cancer, which strikes 10,000 American women each year and kills 4,000. "The only treatments for invasive cervical cancer are radical hysterectomy or radiation therapy, which scars the vagina and can render you sterile," says Mary Jane Minkin, M.D., clinical professor of ob/gyn at the Yale University School of Medicine in New Haven, Connecticut. "Why go through all that if you don't have to?" —Kelly Mickle

Sweet dreams?

Skimping on shut-eye could nearly double your risk for type 2 diabetes, a study in *Sleep* reveals. Even five or fewer hours of sleep per night for only one week can alter levels of appetite-controlling hormones; this can lead to overeating, weight gain and diabetes. Hit snooze!

FROM TOP: THAYER ALVISON GOWDY; STYLING: ABBY JOHNSON; HAIR: CHAD STRAHAN FOR KUSCO MURPHY; MAKEUP: NIKKI LIBERTY FOR CHRISTIAN DIOR COSMETICS; PROP STYLING: CHARLOTTE MALLOR; LINDA STANNARD; M.D. UCTPHOTO RESEARCHERS; STILL LIVES: CNP DIGITAL STUDIO; SEE GET-IT GUIDE.