

Vacation tips to feel your best

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I'm currently writing this on a beautiful sunny 82-degree day about 3 weeks away from a summer vacation. While summer brings an ease to enjoying fresh fruits and vegetables and lighter meals on a consistent basis, summer eating during vacations has a different tune to it. We may experience different types of foods, eating out more than we do at home, not having food readily available, and feeling a bit sluggish by your return home. Having healthy eating habits on vacation does NOT mean only ordering salads at every meal (unless that's what you enjoy) or skipping going to a favorite restaurant worried about how many calories you would consume. It's true that your eating will look differently than it does at home. It's supposed to. You aren't at home in your normal routine. Part of creating life-long healthier eating habits is learning to be flexible with your eating and giving yourself permission and grace to change your eating based on your situation. Vacation certainly calls for a change in eating and that doesn't mean it's wrong or bad. It also doesn't mean you have to give up on all of your goals...but maybe making them a bit more realistic. There certainly are ways to enjoy your vacation AND still feel your best.

- Grab some fruits and veggies. Depending on how and where you're traveling, this may mean bringing apples for snacks in the car, filling up on produce at the farmer's market by your rental or ordering a side of the roasted "vegetable of the day" to replace something fried. It's a great way to experience different produce that are common in other parts of the country (or world) too!
- Don't restrict....meals, experiences, or anything else on vacation! It's tempting to skip a meal or 2 to "save calories" if you know you'll be eating a larger meal or dining out later-on. Skipping meals can lead to overeating at the next meal and cause uncomfortable GI symptoms. Stick to your typical eating schedule the best you can to fuel your body throughout the whole day and make it a little easier to not overeat at your meals...you'll likely end up saving calories in the long run!
- Eat when you're hungry and stop when you're full. Your body is the expert in how much you need to eat to be satisfied at a meal. Listening to your hunger/fullness cues can help with overeating and not feeling bloated and uncomfortable after your meals
- Stay hydrated. Whether you're hiking in the mountains, laying on a beach, or museum hopping, carry a bottle of water with you to prevent dehydration.
- Move your body. Your activity routine is likely going to look different on vacation, that's ok too! Take advantage of your surroundings and the opportunity to change up your routine and maybe use some different muscles too. Here are some examples to find simple movement built into your day: play tag with your kiddos, walk to dinner from your hotel, take a dip in the ocean, do some stretches or yoga in the peacefulness of the mountains, rent a bike and explore where you're staying. Any movement counts. Do what feels good and works for you!

If you're vacationing somewhere new, familiar, or doing a stay-cation this summer, I hope you find time to mindfully enjoy the food around you, give thanks for your body and all of its capabilities, and enjoy the company you're with.