



Q: Retired and no longer flying on a company expense account, I now always book the cheap seats and fly late night schedules. However, lately I've been having trouble sleeping while jammed into the ever more cramped seats. What do you suggest. *PRT, Waco TX*

A: The immediate suggestion is to take your problem to your family physician. He/she should already be aware of your health record and any reasons for sleeplessness. Maybe a simple prescription or over-the-counter sleep aid can do the job. We recommend that you do NOT take any medication on flights without your doctor's approval.

In our frequent red-eye experiences, we travel with a special sleep kit. It consists of a tight cloth eye mask, sound-cancelling earphones and mini-computer or smart phone packed with music, novels and other ear pleasures. Another essential is a small flask of liqueur or brandy. We find a shot before closing our eyes is much more effective than all the sleeping pills ever created.

Of course, even in the cheap seats, you can try to relax by wearing comfy clothing, slippers and inflatable pillow. Either lean back as far as possible or pull out your tray, fold your arms and lay your head down. If it worked during school study or detention hour a generation or so ago, it may help you sleep through your red eye journey. And...pleasant dreams on upcoming flights!