



Just walking out your house, especially if you're in advanced years, can be hazardous to your health, if you're not fit and aware of surroundings. When traveling and venture into a big city with a history of street violence or other hazards, it can be dangerous for both health and safety.

Before planning a trip, consult with members of your family, online government reports and news sources. It may be better to cancel or schedule travel in a less dangerous area.

First things first. Before embarking, schedule a check-up with your family doctor. Get assurance that you're fit enough for the requirements of the journey, and can handle any unexpected rigors you may face. Get a list of prescriptions and signed refill forms from your doctor. Keep copies in your suitcase and on you at all times. Be certain there's an adequate supply to cover all the days expected to be away from home, plus an extra week's. If you have physical limitations, have a note from your doctor to show when specific help is necessary.

When eating fancy, such as aboard a cruise ship or in a luxury hotel, select modest amounts of healthful dishes. Never buy food or drinks from an outside street vendor, even in areas where quality and sanitation are good. It just isn't worth the chance of spending the rest of your trip on the toilet or local hospital bed.

Regular exercise is essential for a traveling senior. It keeps you in good condition, and less likely to be injured or get sick. When in a city, instead of taking a bus or taxi, healthful walking makes sightseeing more leisurely and enjoyable. For seniors slowed down by disability or age, be aware of traffic conditions on city streets, dangers on hiking trails and when in spas and pools.

As a senior traveler in a strange land, your clothing, language and physical limitations may

instantly label you as a prime target for thieves. Never travel alone, always with another person, and preferably with a group. Keep wallet or purse securely in a buttoned pocket or held tightly and strapped under a shoulder.

Street criminals often use kids and elderly women as decoys to distract tourists into opening wallets and purses to give them money. At that moment, the strong arm partner strikes. If you want to give to a street beggar, carry loose change or several small denominations of paper money.

If you obey the simple, mostly obvious, rules of personal safety and good health, your chances of enjoying your next journey will be much greater.