

NEWS RELEASE



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For Immediate Release

Top tips for travelling while pregnant

Planning a white water rafting adventure in the Grand Canyon in your final trimester of pregnancy might be considered overly ambitious, but if you are healthy, well-organised and determined, pregnancy should not be a barrier to travel.

According one of Australia's most respected travel health care specialists Dr. Deborah Mills, you can realise your dream of a romantic rendez vous in Paris with only your partner for example – in fact, it may be the last chance to travel unfettered!

“There are always certain factors to consider for travelling safely but there are myths in circulation too. “Travel in pressurised aircraft is unlikely to endanger the growing child in the early stages of pregnancy, although, the mother will have a slightly increased risk of deep vein thrombosis. To avoid this, book an aisle seat on the plane, wear compression stockings during long journeys and buckle your seatbelt low around the pelvis.

“The middle trimester is the best time to travel. After the first third, the risk of miscarriage is low and morning sickness is usually over. In the last trimester, you may have a big stomach and feel uncomfortable. You may also need an afternoon nap and your feet may swell quite considerably during air travel. Airlines generally refuse to carry women after 36 weeks in case they go into labour. Travel insurance will usually not cover pregnancy-related problems in the last trimester. Preferably, travel with a companion,” she said.

Ideally, discuss your destination with a doctor before plans are finalised. Pregnant travellers can safely visit many places but travel to malarious areas is not recommended.

“Unfortunately a pregnant woman is twice as likely to be bitten by mosquitoes as her non-pregnant counterpart due to increased heat production and increased release of volatile substances from the skin surface.

“Malaria is more serious in pregnant women and can lead to miscarriage, stillbirth, and even maternal death. Anti-malaria tablets can cause side effects if taken during pregnancy so best discuss with your doctor first.

“The standard of local medical care should also be taken into account. Visiting countries with unreliable medical services may spell disaster if pregnancy complications develop,” she said.

Travel in altitudes above 4,000m is not recommended in pregnancy. Pregnant travellers visiting high altitude areas for more than two days need specialised travel health advice. Pregnant travellers should also avoid scuba diving, extreme physical exertion and hot saunas.

As a pioneer within the field, Dr Deborah Mills of Dr Deb's Travel Health Care, has practiced in travel medicine for 20 years. She is also the author of Australia's most popular medical travel book 'Travelling Well' which is in its fourteenth edition and has 125,000 copies in print.

For more great travel information and resources visit www.drdeb.com.au

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