

PERFORMANCE PLANNING: TRAVEL SMART!

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A key component to a safe trip is having the proper insurance coverage whether you are traveling in country or out of country. Many athletes often overlook their medical coverage when travelling between provinces within Canada. It is important to be aware of what insurance or medical coverage you have either through your provincial sport organization, national sport organization, work, or school. Not being covered - even within your home country - can cost you big! Keep reading for some simple tips and information on how to properly prepare for travel so that if any unforeseen incidents occur you are prepared.



COVERAGE AT HOME

Did you know that since 1982 the Canadian Athlete Insurance Program (CAIP) offers insurance coverage for sport related injuries and includes “**overuse**” coverage which has been unique to CAIP since the beginning and remains the most popular and sought after benefit amongst Canada’s athletes and coaches? Overuse insurance covers athletes for chronic type injuries such as tendonitis and stress fractures that happen over a period of time as a result of repetitive activity, and that occur while in Canada.

There are three different plans that you can purchase depending on your insurance needs: Gold, Silver, Bronze. In Canada coverage also includes **sport accidents** which can be any unexpected and unintentional events that can occur by chance while competing in or practicing for a sport.

COVERAGE ABROAD

For Canadian Athletes and coaches CAIP now has an extended program offering three options for Out of Country Coverage (OOC).

- Per Trip: \$30 per week of travel per eligible member. CAIP requires the complete dates of travel before leaving Canada.
- Individual Annual Plan – There is no limit to the number of trips taken during the period of insurance subject to the number of consecutive days chosen (30 or 60 days). The member does not have to inform CAIP each time they travel, unless they require Top-Up insurance. The premiums are: \$180 per year for a 30 day Individual Annual Plan. And \$300 per year for a 60 day Individual Annual Plan
- Group Annual Plan: Can be arranged for the Sport Body for their respective members.

Another popular source of travel insurance for athletes living in BC is BCAA as it offers inexpensive travel insurance that can be purchased on a multi-trip or single trip basis. Purchasing this coverage online will save you an additional 5%. Trip cancellation coverage is also available with BCAA. In addition, optional coverage is available for Professional Sports involvement and Motorized Speed Contest sports.

TRAVEL TIPS

You've packed your bags, checked every list twice, and your tickets are in hand. But have you thought about YOU? The you that's about to drive to the airport, sit in an airport lounge, board your 3rd trans-atlantic flight in as many weeks, and SIT. Sitting is not usually an activity associated with high performance athletes, and yet it encompasses a large component of the travel experience. Keep these tips in mind the next time you are travelling in order to stay in top shape for competition.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Help your therapy team help you: QUIT SLOUCHING in the airport, on the flights, and while waiting for your flight. Common effects of slouching (as shown in this picture) include shoulder impingements, chronic neck tension, and travel headaches – so remember to: sit up tall, use a back support, and to 'keep your shoulders over your hips and under your ears'.
2. AIRPORT YOGA: This is like hot yoga without the heat and with your clothes on! Keep your suppleness, reduce postural muscle tightness (like your lower back, your shoulders etc), improve relaxation in flight, and pass the time with an active recovery technique. The yoga mat also doubles nicely as a back support when in flight.
3. TRIGGER POINT BALL: Travel with the small balls for releasing muscle tightness. You can get a gentle hamstring, quadriceps, glute/piriformis, midback, shoulder and neck massage while en route. This increases the likelihood of resting and relaxing while decreasing the amount of muscle tightness that you will have to 'undo' when you reach your destination.



TRAVEL CHECKLIST

- **Water** – stay as hydrated as possible leading up to your flight. This will help to combat the effects of travelling between time zones
- **Compression socks** – to eliminate lower leg swelling while sitting for long periods of time
- **Travelling food supply** – take any essential food items with you including vitamins and supplements that may not be available where you are travelling to
- **Ear plugs and eye covers** – Sleeping soundly during the flight is key!
- Remember to be cautious of **food and water hygiene** – the stress of travelling may reduce your resistance to illness

HELPFUL HINT!

Reset your body clock: It may be beneficial to begin to re-adjust your internal biological clock a few days early when switching time zones. Depending on if you traveling west or east, going to bed a bit earlier or stay up a bit later. This will help when you arrive in the new time zone.