

# INVICTUS

SPORTS PERFORMANCE AND FITNESS

## 5 Tips for Pain Free Air Travel



You might be traveling this season and perhaps it's to a destination that requires flying in a tin can 40,000 feet in the air. As exciting it is to pack up and flee for new horizons, air traveling can be a pain, literally.

I've had my fair share of experiences in the clouds. As someone who's training year-round while also dealing with past injuries, I've collected a tablet of tips for how to make the trip a bit less daunting. Whether it's for work or leisure, give some of these a try the next time you're headed out of town.

1. **Aim for the Aisle:** I'm a glutton for a good view, especially if I'm flying over scenic landscapes, but it's hardly a trade off for being able to stand and walk freely without disturbing my neighbors. I started the habit in college after back injury so I could hang my right leg out until the flight attendant comes storming down the aisle like a bat out of hell. Today, I take advantage of the outside seat by standing at least every 30-45 minutes and getting some blood flow restored.
2. **Cue Compression Socks:** Yep, I'm talking about the knee high, skintight socks that maybe your grandfather wears under his slacks. Sorry to blow up your spot, Pop. Compression socks are extremely popular in the endurance and triathlon world to keep swelling at bay during long bouts of time on feet, but how can they help for air travel? For starters, they keep blood flow consistent, decreasing the risk of blood clots and cardiac events that can sometimes be increased in planes. Secondly, they'll keep swelling at bay. When you're jetting off the plane to an event the last thing you want to feel or see when you look down are swollen ankles. I never get on a plane with my compression socks promptly snug to my lower legs.
3. **Invest in an E-Stim:** Whether you're lodged in the middle or window seat or consistently deal with the same physical pain points each flight from sitting, a portable electric stim unit could be beneficial to your comfort while deliberately bringing blood towards the areas you're treating. Consistent muscle contractions will increase circulation and dial back pain receptors. I bring this along for my glutes and lower back, especially for flights longer than 3 hours.

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4. **Keep it Clean:** There's few things worse than feeling sick while traveling. Keep your diet clean in the days leading up to your trip. I typically fast on early morning flights so my body isn't trying to digest while being compressed in the plane, but if it's an afternoon or night flight, I'll follow my usual routine with an emphasis on vegetables, fibers and clean proteins. If you're opting for processed foods, inflammation is increasing, and so are your chances of feeling bogged down in the air. I think we can all agree that refreshingly, the options in the airports and on the flights themselves are increasingly growing healthier and cleaner. When you can, support those efforts and when all else fails, just say no to processed sugars.
5. **HYDRATE!** My friends, you hear this overlapping message for a reason. Keep your body happy on a cellular level by ensuring adequate hydration. This doesn't mean chugging the water you forgot to empty at TSA. Start drinking both water and electrolytes 24 hours before take-off for optimal absorption.

Blood flow really is the key to a lot of the ailments we experience today! From physical pains, poor digestion and other systematic disruptions to the organ functions, restoring blood flow is always a good idea. Walk, move, stretch, your way to better blood flow and restoration. Whether you're someone who feels the impact or not, air travel is a lot on the body. Provide yourself with the right tools, sleep, fuel and hydration to feel your best at the next destination.

Hope these tips help you on your next flight. Take the time to experiment with what helps you feel your best dependent on what the day ahead demands.