

Vacations tips for seniors

Dear Jo:

My wife and I have a little extra money saved apart from our pension and have decided to take a trip. Our first choice is to fly to Europe. Since we are in the early planning stages we would appreciate any advice you, as a gerontologist, could give us. Both of us have health problems (nothing serious) and would like to be ready for most medical emergencies. Thank you.

Mr. K.



gerontology

A. Jolayne Farrell

Dear Mr. K.:

Retirees, like you and your wife, are at an advantage in that you have more time to plan your trips and are not limited by holiday time and the many other restrictions that younger employed people have to work through.

Before you decide where to go, spend some time looking over magazines and newspapers for interesting places to visit and special trip packages. Also call several airlines to find out if they offer reduced prices to retirees.

If you decide to travel outside the country, you and your wife should get your health status in order.

Both of you should get a brief written summary of your current medical problems from your doctor.

IF EITHER of you are on medication, bring along enough for the entire time you will be gone. In many countries the remedies we have may not be available or may come in different dosages. Pack your medications in your "carry on" luggage so you will not be seriously inconvenienced if you "checked through" bag contains your pills.

If you wear glasses, it makes sense to bring at least one extra pair. You should also carry a copy of your eyeglasses prescription. In an emergency you can always find an optometrist who will provide glasses quickly if you have a prescription.

Since you plan to fly, there are a few things that you and your wife as older persons with health problems should consider. First of all, find out if the airline you use has a preboarding policy; as retirees you should request this courtesy.

ON FLIGHTS lasting longer than 90 minutes it is important to get some exercise periodically such as isometrics done at your seat and walking around the cabin every hour or so. If varicose veins are a problem, it's a good idea to wear elastic stockings or even Ace bandage.

On long flights jet lag can be a problem. Apparently it takes about one day for the body to readjust to each one-hour shift in time zones.

To diminish jet lag, you should get adequate rest before your flight. And during the flight avoid napping, large meals and alcohol. It also is helpful if you can arrange your flight so that you arrive at your destination close to your normal bedtime.

Should you need an English-speaking doctor when travelling outside of North America, you can write to the International Association for Medical Assistance to Travelers at 738 Center Street, Lewiston, N.Y. 14092. The booklet listing the doctors' names is free, but donations to the Association are welcome.

Mr. K., I wish you and your wife a pleasant trip.

Readers can write to Jolayne Farrell at P.O. Box 66, Postal Station G, 1075 Queen Street East, Toronto, Ontario, Canada.

Spring cleaning's great for dogs, too

The Michigan Humane Society's Oakland County division invites pet owners to have their dogs "spring cleaned" at a Bath-A-Thon 10 a.m. until 4 p.m. June 1.

Baths will range from \$10 to \$20, depending on the size of the dog. Proceeds will go to the humane society's full-service shelter that assists thousands of

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No guarantees in gardening

Several readers have contacted Concern Detroit with questions on how to have a more successful garden. So from Hannah Stevens, Macomb County Cooperative Extension Agent and Concern Board Member, comes this and next week's column on gardening.

There are no guarantees in vegetable gardening. But you can improve your chances of success by selecting a good garden site, choosing crops and varieties carefully and planting at the proper time.

A good garden site is sunny, well drained and fertile. It should have a source of water nearby and, ideally, be close to home so you can work the garden, check on it frequently and enjoy watching it grow.

MOST GARDEN vegetables do best in full sun, so avoid spots that are shaded by buildings and landscape plants. Trees and shrubs will also compete with garden crops for moisture and soil nutrients. Avoid low-lying spots where water collects after a rain. Most plants do poorly if their roots spend much time in standing water. Low-lying areas also tend to be the last areas to warm up in the spring and the first spots frosted in the fall.

Plant diseases may also be a greater problem in such areas. Air movement in low spots is poor, plants are slow to dry off after rain or irrigation, and diseases that require moisture on the leaves to get established have more opportunity to get a foothold.

Plants stressed by generally poor growing conditions tend to be more susceptible to disease invasion than healthy plants.

CHOOSE CROPS and varieties that are well adapted to local growing conditions, particularly the length of the growing season.

The plants that will tolerate cool weather and even frost are not as big a concern as the warm-weather



Terry Gibb

crops that are injured or killed by cold temperatures.

Check the number of days from seeding or transplanting to maturity. Select only crops and varieties that can mature within your area's average growing season.

To find what local frost-free dates are, check with your county Cooperative Extension Service office. (The telephone number is in your local book under county listings).

ANOTHER IMPORTANT consideration when selecting varieties is disease resistance. Selecting disease-resistant varieties is the most important step you can take in preventing disease problems in the garden. Improving disease-resistance,

therefore, has been an important objective of the scientists who develop new varieties.

When you plant your crops greatly influences their chance of success. Some crops grow and mature best under cool temperatures. Others have to have warm temperatures to thrive and produce.

Planting cool-weather crops in early spring and again in late summer to harvest in the fall, and planting warm-weather crops after the danger of frost is past, will give all the crops their best chance to perform to their potential.

NEXT WEEK: "Timing is Critical in Garden Planting."

The Consumer Mailbag answers your questions. Address mail to The Consumer Mailbag, Concern Detroit, 1025 Shelby, Detroit 48226.

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