



Dr. Jonathon Osorio is a friend and my family physician and I consult with him before I take any trip, especially to remote locations. With travel restrictions easing up, you might consider a visit to the doctor before you go so you have the right medications with you. (Photo by Mark Rackay)

## Traveling and medications — be prepared

I have always been an adventurous spirit and adrenaline junkie. Traveling around the world in pursuit of hunting and fishing has given our family's finances a double hernia. Fortunately, I have a wife who understands her husband is never going to grow up, and moreover, she occasionally will join me.

One of the most important requirements for having a successful trip is proper planning. With the thought of preparations in mind, COVID-19 has brought international travel to a new level.

Vaccines, face masks, pretests, and everything else have become a part of travel.

With travel opening up in this country as well as other parts of the world, we do not want to let our guard down. You do not want to find yourself sick with some ailment while on safari in

Mozambique or have a bad reaction to some "street meat" while on a fishing trip in the Patagonia region of Argentina. You could be taken to the local witch doctor, have beads shaken over your head, and fed a concoction of crushed insect wings and roadhouse beetle dung. You need to prepare.

Murphy, of Murphy's Law fame, does not really care how far you might be from medical assistance when he decides to pay you a visit. If you are heading to the wilds of Canada, or the Colorado high country accessible only by helicopter in an emergency, you might start off the trip with a visit to your family doctor. It is a good idea to make sure you are in working order before the trip. That is why you should start out with a visit to the good old family Doctor, while your body is still under warranty.

I visit with my family doctor and close personal friend, Dr. Jonathon Osorio, before any trip I take to a remote location. I have a good working relationship with him. He gives me advice as to what



### Tips from the Posse

By Mark Rackay

prescriptions I may need and most importantly, the how, when and why to use them properly in the event I fall ill. That is the most important part, knowing how to use them.

These are some of the guidelines and advice that Dr. Osorio offered:

#### Traveling abroad

Many travelers need to carry their medicines with them across international borders to treat chronic or serious health issues. However, each country has its own guidelines about which medicines are legal.

Check with the foreign embassy to make sure your meds are permitted

If you purchase medications abroad, consider contacting the nearest US embassy or consulate who should be able to recommend reputable doctors and pharmacies that can help.

Don't get medications in open markets.

Make sure medications you buy abroad are in original packing and check ingredient names to match what you have been prescribed.

Prior to leaving on your trip, consult with your primary doctor to make sure you have enough medication for your trip. Your insurance may not pay for early refills.

Be mindful of extreme temperatures that can reduce effectiveness of many medications

Pack your medications in your carry-on luggage to avoid losing them if luggage is lost.

Keep medications in original, labeled containers.

If traveling with controlled substances, a letter from your doctor on let-

terhead stationery listing your medications could be useful.

Check [www.CDC.gov](http://www.CDC.gov) to view specific recommendations for your country and area of travel with regards to recommended vaccines, outbreaks, etc. You may benefit from taking with you a prescription antibiotic for "Traveler's Diarrhea" and/or medication to prevent Malaria.

#### General travel

Consider the following common ailments that might affect you and the common medications you could easily obtain to take with you:

Allergies—make sure to take your antihistamine of choice (generic or brand name Zyrtec, Allegra, Claritin, Xyzal, Benadryl). Remember that brand names may be different in other countries so be familiar with generic chemical names.

Pain/inflammation — take aspirin, Tylenol, or your NSAID of choice (Ibuprofen, naproxen, etc). These may be helpful for minor injuries resulting in pain or inflammation. Ask your doctor if there are any reasons why you should not use these meds.

Diarrhea — grab Imodium to take with you. CDC travel website gives basic advice on drinking water in your area of travel. Be prepared to filter water or buy bottled water as needed.

Motion sickness — if you know you are susceptible to motion sickness, make sure you are prepared with Dramamine or talk to your doctor about Scopolamine patches

Acid reflux/indigestion — if you have issues of acid reflux, makes sure you take with you your antacid of choice because you never know how different foods abroad might affect you.

Diabetes — don't forget your diabetic testing supplies! Testing strips typically are very expensive

Rescue medications — make sure to have any insulin, inhalers, or EpiPens you may need as prescribed by your doctor

based on your health needs

I would also reemphasize the checking with CDC before you travel for any special health alerts or recommended vaccines you may need before going there. I have had to get vaccinated for yellow fever and typhoid before some of the adventures I went on. A couple of the places you will want to consider malaria medications.

If you play hard enough, you are eventually going to get hurt. A good first aid class, with up-to-date training is essential. If you have a daily medication you take, such as a blood pressure medicine, you may want to carry an extra 15-day supply with you.

The insurance may not cover it, but it just might come in handy. I once spent an extra six days in Provo on a blue marlin trip, watching a stalled tropical storm make our life miserable. No flights in or out, and obviously, no fishing. You can get stranded because of weather and many other reasons, so be prepared for the worst.

I'm lucky to have someone like Dr. Osorio in my corner. He is an adventurer himself and understands that I am a terminal, professional little boy. Good thing he is around to teach me what I may need before I go and put my broken parts back together when I get home. Check with your doctor. I bet your family sawbones will be glad to help.

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## Uphill with a will



### Outdoors

By John T. Unger



Jeff Dunbar and Jacob Torrey (left to right) enjoy a laugh after signing the summit register atop Baldy Peak in the middle of a ten mile mountain run during late Spring. (Photo by John T. Unger)

Your running shoes are on, socks fitting just right, feeling all warmed up as your footfalls have moved you across the flat approach.

Then, looking ahead, you see that your path has begun inclining upward (maybe way upward).

Whether it is the bike path in Baldridge Park as it climbs Sunset Mesa, or whether it is the old mining road up Imogene Pass, running uphill can be rewarding.

The views. The workout. The sense of accomplishment. The eventual power development of quadriceps and calves.

In most years, by the middle of June enough snow has melted off of the high country to let you run up the Bridge of Heaven northeast of Ouray. The same is true of Bear Creek trail which is just south of that town.

The lower half of the road up to Yankee Boy Basin dries up on a similar timing, as does the trail into Blaine Basin west of Ridgway.

Closer to Montrose there are wonderful views to be had by running hills in the adobes east of Flattop Road, north of there at the Elephant Skin Recreation Area, and both on the approach to and within the Gunnison Gorge east of Olathe.

Do yourself a favor and take along a good map from the sporting goods store or the bike shops before tackling an unfamiliar route.

Even roads and trails which we know well can braid in and out at unmarked crossings and can thereby look confusing after a winter of being away from them. Such is the case particularly with the Gunnison Gorge National Conservation Area, in which some signage exists, but certainly not at every crossroads.

Having first had a recent exam by your healthcare provider, you might choose to take on the challenge of running hills (and mountains). Know that running uphill is an entirely different mechanical maneuver for the human body.

We shorten our stride, but without running completely on our toes. No heel-strike here! The arch of the foot must absorb some shock, while the calf muscle and Achilles tendon must work from an elongated position.

If your Achilles tendon hurts after uphill running, try an even shorter stride, until you have spent more weeks gradually adapting to upslopes.

Avoid hunching your shoulders forward here, or else you may impede the flow of that precious mountain air into the lungs. Gasping wears you down, so focus on breathing deeply from the diaphragm, expanding

the entire chest with each intake of a breath.

Slow down your pace as needed, and continue to use your same effort and breathing rate as when you are running on level ground. With repeat outings, gradually you can get more work with less effort, and also can then fine tune your perception of when to push and when to throttle back the exertion.

Consider experimenting with running even twenty steps with your flat palms kept against the sides of your hips. A shocking feeling of extreme awkwardness will strike immediately. The torque which such a running technique would require of your core trunk muscles would have you twisting like a just-landed brown trout.

The arms are not for swinging across the front, as if knitting a sweater. Instead, they pump forward and back, somewhat like pulling oneself ahead by gripping a rope in front.

No need to clench that imaginary rope, though. Keep the hands and fingers themselves relaxed. Try resting the tip of the middle finger on the tip of the thumb, as a reminder to keep it loose and at ease. Far from just staying out of the way of the trunk and legs, the arms and the pectoral muscles of the chest perform important functions in propelling you uphill. In normal running on level ground, the swing of the left arm counteracts the high forces generated by the right leg driving itself forward.

Especially while running uphill, this motion of the arm adds to the forward thrust. It keeps your trunk from having to twist needlessly and from wasting energy and inertia/momentum.

Then, of course, the same effect happens with the other arm and the other leg. This happens about 1800 times each during a three mile run. Even if you do not know how to dance, you are using some serious rhythm here!

Arms. Legs. Lungs. Skills. Mindset. Savor the high country when you get up to it, and you can be proud of the magic of the human body that propels itself uphill.

John T. Unger is a Diplomat of the American Chiropractic Board of Sports Physicians, with an active practice in Montrose. He finds that running through patches of snow is especially inviting after these recent hot days down in the Uncompahgre Valley. Ideas for future columns are welcomed at [sportsdocung-er.com](mailto:sportsdocung-er.com).