

During the day, why not stop at a market or supermarket and shop alongside the local women? You can learn about the food specialties of the area and put together a meal to eat as a picnic in your room. Even with wine, it's less expensive than eating out every night.

Understand that, in some parts of the world, "respectable" women

You should maintain contact with at least one person back home, especially if you're travelling solo. By letter, fax, e-mail or telephone, let that person know where you are and where you're heading next.

Off travelling for the day? You should leave a note in your room

don't go out alone in the evening. In these places, a flagrant rejection of this custom could very well put you in jeopardy. Instead, after a long day of sightseeing, welcome the opportunity to rest, relax and rejuvenate yourself, so you can be ready to enjoy another full day of new experiences.

In Saudi Arabia, a woman is not allowed to drive a motor vehicle or ride a bicycle. She must have a male driver.

explaining where you're going. If you run into trouble, at least there will be clues to follow.

"Travelling – it opens your eyes. It makes you realize how well off we are here in Canada."

Captain Nicole Sauvé,
airline pilot

Always carry a business card from your hotel or B&B. If you get lost, approach

another woman on the street and show her the address on the card. She may be able to point you in the right direction.

Not all travel books deal with uniquely female health needs. You can augment what you read with the experienced advice of other women travellers.

It's a good idea to carry your doctor's phone and fax numbers as well as copies of prescriptions for medication you might require along the way.

You won't always be able to eat properly. Consider carrying multi-vitamins to supplement your diet.

Your regular brand of contraceptive pill may not be available at your destination. Take enough with you to last the whole trip.

Major stomach upsets (diarrhea or vomiting) cause your body to lose its ability to absorb the contraceptive pill. It's wise to use condoms to guard against unwanted pregnancy.

You may want to pack a supply of condoms to protect yourself against sexually transmitted diseases, too.

When travelling to developing countries, carry a supply of tampons and sanitary napkins.

When travelling in Asia, it's a good idea to carry a supply of disposable chopsticks. Dishwashing facilities are not always adequate to kill bacteria.

They tend to be difficult to find and may be expensive.

It's not unusual for women to stop menstruating when they're travelling for a long time. If there are no other symptoms and you're not concerned that you might be pregnant, don't worry.

If you're prone to yeast infections, they're more likely to recur in warm, moist climates. Wearing loose-fitting cotton underwear and skirts rather than pants may help. Carry appropriate medication in your first-aid kit; it might not be available where you're travelling.

Cystitis is an infection of the urinary tract and bladder. Drinking a lot of purified water, especially in hotter climates, may help to reduce your chances of suffering from this problem.