

BUSINESS TRIPS NEGATIVELY IMPACT OUR HEALTH



No exercise, sleep deprivation, unhealthy food – business trips take a toll on your body. Eight out of ten business travelers are aware of these unhealthy consequences. But especially older travelers neglect exercise when they are at home. Women tend to wind down on trips less easily.

These are the results of a study called „Chefsache Business Travel 2015“ carried out by Travel Management Companies in the German Travel Association (Deutscher Reise Verband - DRV).

Business trips tend to go hand in hand with an unhealthy lifestyle. 82 percent of all business travelers state that they neglect exercise and they work instead of relaxing in the evening. 79 percent tend to consume more alcohol on business trips than at home.

This is often followed by an unhealthy or irregular diet and a lack of sleep. Especially travelers at the age of 40 or older sit too much during their business trips. 84 percent state they neglect exercise in general. On the other hand, women on business trips have issues with winding down or sleeping, three quarters of all participants stated that they were simply unable to relax. When it comes to long distance trips, both genders equally struggle with jetlag and climate adjustment.

"No manager can be held accountable for jetlag. But the high stress level on business trips comes with health consequences that should not be underestimated. That's why managers need to pay attention to the strain on their staff and organize their trips as professionally as possible," says Stefan Vorndran, chairman of Business Travel at the DRV.

"Inadequate transportation, inconvenient changing times and bad internet connections are some of the largest stress factors. Professional travel planning can avoid long traveling times and hectic changing between public transport," Vorndran emphasized.

A good method to prevent unhealthy lifestyle on business trips is a considerate choice of partner hotels. A hotel with an extensive sports or spa area and a great restaurant does not necessarily have to be more expensive, but can make a large difference in work fitness for the staff. More and more hotels adjust to the needs of stressed business travelers.

Five tips for stress-free business trips:

1. Be active: Why not use a bicycle for short distances within the city instead of a taxi? Remarkable 47 percent stated to have used a rented bike on business trips. Short walks can also help to clear the head.
2. Turn off your smartphones: The staff should make new contacts instead of checking their business e-mail inboxes. After all, meeting new contacts and business partners are among the top reasons for business trips and important to 90 percent of travelers.
3. Exercise: Sneakers and a t-shirt fit into almost any suitcase. Many hotels have gym rooms. Those who choose to take a jog instead of a visit to the bar are better negotiators.

4. Travel experts can help with orientation. Companies can help in advance by compiling information which helps their staff in the new environment. A healthy meal in a good restaurant should always be preferred to fast food.

5. The business travel bureau takes care of optimizing walking distances and transport changing times. The pros also help with choosing hotels close to the airport or exhibition grounds. Travelers who are stressed by sprints between means of transportation will have a hard time winding down in the evening and resort to unhealthy food or alcohol.

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