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TRAVELING IN COMFORT

For individuals with physical limitations or chronic pain, traveling can be a real challenge. Handling luggage can be a problem—as well as long periods of sitting or standing. But with a little pre-planning, your summer getaway can be what a vacation should be: fun and relaxing!

If you're planning on traveling alone, check beforehand to determine what extra help you may need. It may even be worth tipping a doorman to manage your luggage, which could risk straining your back if done alone. In airports, you may want to look for caddy carts or automated walking ramps that will get you and your heavy carry-ons to your gate effortlessly and painlessly.

And before you board your plane or get into your car, be sure to plan for a bathroom break. This will give you peace of mind during that unavoidable period of time you must remain seated. When driv-



ing or riding in a car, always plan to stop and stretch frequently. It can be as simple as pointing your toes five times or shrugging your shoulders to release tension. These quick exercises will help cut down on stiffness when you reach your final destination.

A lumbar pillow may also keep you traveling in comfort during those sleepy flights and car rides. Lumbar pillows are great because they can keep your lower spine supported in neutral. A neutral lower spine will decrease stress to your upper back, neck, and shoulders. There are even air-filled back and neck pillows available that are easy to travel with. They accommodate a variety of body builds and seating because you can adjust the air to achieve the correct amount of support needed.

When you *do* arrive at your destination, a sleep mask or familiar blanket from home may also help you get your much-needed zzz's. Happy traveling!

GO NUTS FOR NUT BUTTER!

Tasty, Filling, and Spreadable!

Looking for a new way to eat PB & J? It may be as simple as opening a jar of cashew or almond butter. In fact, research has shown that people who eat these nut butters often weigh less than those who don't. Why? The combination of protein, fat, and fiber keeps you full, so you eat less overall.



In addition to a tasty spread, nut butters can be used to add rich flavor to Asian noodles or dipping sauces. If you have the option, be sure to choose the chunky varieties; you'll get more fiber and a delicious crunch. It's also best to use natural versions that are free of added oils and hydrogenated fats. Just remember that a little goes a long way. The ideal amount is one to two table-

spoons—not the whole jar!

Spreads like almond butter are even great for swimsuit season. In addition to vitamin E, a powerful antioxidant, these slender nuts contain magnesium—a mineral your body must have in order to produce energy, build and maintain muscle tissue, and regulate blood sugar. A stable blood sugar helps prevent those nasty cravings that lead to overeating and weight gain.

If you're looking for an easy morning snack that *doesn't* require spreading, whole nuts are also effective. A small handful packs the nutrients your body needs and will keep you satisfied until lunchtime. An empty Altoids can will hold this amount perfectly. So go ahead and go nuts!

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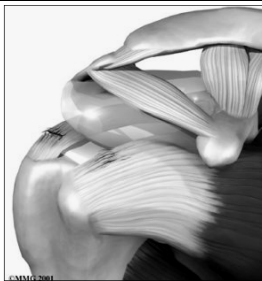
ONE TOUGH CUFF

So what makes the rotator cuff so tough anyway?

The rotator cuff is actually a group of four muscles whose connecting tendons form a continuous sheath, or "cuff," around the humeral head. This functions to hold or stabilize the humeral head in the socket

of the shoulder blade when you raise and rotate your arm. The cuff is "tough" because healthy tendon is 2-3 times stronger than the attached muscle—making it able to withstand strong muscle contractions for lifting, pushing, and pulling with your arm.

Unfortunately, the rotator cuff tendons are a common source of shoulder problems. A contributing factor is the inherently low blood supply to the cuff. This is not a problem for a healthy cuff, but following injury, illness, or deconditioning, the lower blood supply creates a slower healing process or a lower overall physical capacity. Add an



additional factor of poor posture, which causes abnormal shoulder biomechanics, and "wear and tear" happens through overuse and repetition of movements—particularly overhead ones.

A tear in the rotator cuff causes varying degrees of pain and weakness that needs to be evalu-

ated by a physician. Depending on the severity of the injury, treatment options range from conservative treatment (physical therapy) to surgery for repair of the torn cuff tendons.

Without any treatment, rotator cuff disorders may get worse. Over time, you may have more pain and lose range of motion and strength in your shoulder, making it harder to do your daily activities. Feel free to call the therapists at PTC if you have been experiencing shoulder pain or would like to know more about torn rotator cuff symptoms.

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