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**The Business Traveler's Diet Problem: Staying Fit When on the Run**

**By Protica Research**

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Despite the fact that accurate nutrition information can be accessed by almost anyone with an Internet connection or a library card, the 21st century has picked up where the last one left off: one dominated by poor eating habits.

The reason for this national dietary deficiency is not due to any single source or kind of nutrition misinformation. Nor can it be said that a lack of interest or effort on the part of health-conscious Americans is to blame. Actually, there are more health-conscious Americans than ever before. The problem of poor eating habits is not a strategic, idealistic, or tactical one it is a logistical dilemma.

Americans of all ages live such busy, fast-paced lifestyles, that eating nutritious meals is seen as something of a luxury to be enjoyed on special occasions or when one rarely has a few hours to prepare a complete meal. Seldom is this healthy eating challenge more pressing, however, than for the typical business traveler[i].

The second biggest source for unhealthy food in the life of a typical business traveler begins at the airport. The vast majority of these hubs of transit activity offer travelers a selection of fast foods or snack foods that are usually very high in carbohydrates, unsaturated fats, and loaded with calories.

Yet if the airport or station is the second biggest source of unhealthy eating, then what is the first? Without doubt, it is on the airplane itself.

In the past, the criticism levied against airline food was its sheer tastelessness and lack of variety. Yet as the overall awareness of nutrition - and lack of nutrition - in some food sources has grown over the past decade, a related distress has grown over the nutritionally flawed food that most business travelers are subjected to while en route.

Indeed, according to a study by the American weight-loss program organization Nutricise[ii], the average meal served by airlines in all service classes tops 1000 calories. This high number for a single meal is more than half the daily total number of calories for "average eaters". Yet this problem goes

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beyond calorie counting. Almost 45% of the 1000+ calories in an airline meal come from fat which is a full 15% more than some experts recommend as the 30% optimum daily fat-from-calorie level[iii].

In response to this challenge, some airlines are offering more eating options for business travelers, including vegetarian and vegan meals that are typically (though not always) lower in saturated fat, calories, and sodium. However, a 2003 study[iv] by the Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine (PCRM) regrettably noted that of the 10 airlines surveyed, only 1 of the 10 was observed to provide easily available healthy eating choices. 3 of the 10 airlines offered some degree of healthy eating options, though planning ahead was necessary — something that is not always feasible for business travelers. The remaining 6 airlines surveyed were criticized for providing little or no effort at offering vegetarian (i.e. low-fat, low sodium, low calorie) in-flight eating options.

On top of this, business travelers are faced with yet another eating challenge that those not in the air are not forced to address. Whereas most people "on the ground" can physically leave a restaurant or deliberately choose to purchase food that conforms to a healthy eating regimen, those "in the air" are often forced to accept what they are given. Most business travelers are typically short of time and running from meetings to airports and back again. Therefore, the decision to eat the high-fat, high-calorie, high-sodium, and altogether unbalanced airline meal is often better than the alternative of not eating at all.

While some awareness is creeping into the world of business traveler nutrition, thanks in part to the work of the PCRM and others, this awareness is not spreading quickly enough. Business travel in the US comprises over 200 million person-trips per year[v] and this means that a lot unhealthy meals are awaiting a lot of business travelers who, quite frankly, need more nutritious food.

There have been some attempts to respond to this massive business traveler need, including a halfhearted effort by most airlines to revise menus. There have also been several "nutritional supplement" options, typically in fluid or bar form, that have proposed to help fill this business traveler nutritional gap.

Unfortunately, like the revised airline meal effort, the vast majority of these supplements fall short of providing a high-protein, low-calorie, low-carbohydrate nutrition that travelers need. Furthermore, the handful of products that have in some sense met these protein, calorie, and carbohydrate requirements are usually devoid of essential nutrients.

However, a small number of nutritionally wise products are generating positive feedback from business travelers, both for nutritional value content, and for traveler-friendly fluid containers that can take a great deal of airport bag handler abuse. Furthermore, since these products are liquid, they can be ingested easily without needing to be diluted, mixed, or taken with large amounts of water or other fluid.

Taken as either a supplement or a meal on its own, these intelligent and scientifically validated nutritional products - which offer a complete range of essential vitamins - help business travelers stay healthy in ways that fit into their busy, time-conscious lives.

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### About Protica

Founded in 2001, Protica, Inc. is a nutritional research firm with offices in Lafayette Hill and Conshohocken, Pennsylvania. Protica manufactures capsulized foods, including Profect, a compact, hypoallergenic, ready-to-drink protein beverage containing zero carbohydrates and zero fat. Information on Protica is available at [www.protica.com](http://www.protica.com)

You can also learn about Profect at [www.profect.com](http://www.profect.com)

### References

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### **Use Hostel Accommodation If Travelling On A Budget**

**By K.J. Snow**

You might think of hostelling as something that college students do while traveling through Europe for the summer. However, hostelling is not just for the college crowd anymore, and now includes people of all ages and backgrounds. If you are a traveler on a budget, staying at a hostel can be an adventure that will add to your travel experience.

Staying in a hostel will not be everyone's cup of tea, and many travelers would prefer to spend the money on a traditional hotel. Hostel traveling is best suited to those traveling alone, or to young people

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traveling in groups. Hostels are not really recommended for families traveling with young children. In fact, many hostels do not accept children under a certain age.

Most hostels are set up like dormitory rooms, with several bunk beds arranged in the room, with anywhere from four to ten bunks per room. Each traveler is assigned a specific bed upon check-in.

Nearly all of the hostels in the United States group their accommodations according to gender, with the female guests in one section of rooms and the male guests in another. In multi-level hostels, males and females are often separated by floor.

It is not uncommon, however for European hostels (and those elsewhere around the world) to allow mixed genders to share a room. Make sure to ask about the policy of the hostel before you check in. I, as a woman traveling solo, have never encountered a problem with these arrangements, and I have stayed in hostels throughout Europe, including Rome, London and Amsterdam. Some visitors might be surprised or offended by these sleeping arrangements.

The bathroom accommodations at hostels differ also, with some rooms containing a shared bathroom and shower, while other hostels will have shower and bathroom facilities located in the hallway. If you would prefer not to share a bathroom with strangers, make sure you ask about the hostel's policy ahead of time.

More often now, reservations are becoming increasingly vital at hostels, especially during the summer months in popular cities. It is now not at all unusual for hostels in popular tourist cities to be booked solid for months, where once it was common for travelers to be able drop by the hostel and expect to get a bed.

Price is by far the biggest appeal of staying at hostels. The nightly rate for a hostel is usually no higher than \$25 or \$30 per night, with most costing even less. With the average hotel room costing somewhere around \$100 to \$150 in many cities, it is easy to see why hostels are becoming such a popular alternative.

Another benefit of staying in a hostel is that the staff is extremely accommodating and knowledgeable about the local area. Unlike many staff members of some luxury hotels, who travel in from the outlying areas and rarely see the city in which they work, hostel staff tend to live in the city, and have an personal knowledge of the local sites, including which attractions are can't miss and which ones aren't worth the trip.

Hostels also usually have access to discounts and coupons for local area attractions and restaurants, and they can provide information on the best restaurants and hangouts around.

While not everyone will find a hostel appealing, and the accommodation of a local hostel are simple at best, they can be wonderful options for lodging for the budget minded traveler. After all, the goal of travel is to get out and see the world, and hostel travel lets you save money on lodging so that you can do just that.

To learn more about budget travel and get vacationing tips visit



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