

## Jet Setting While Pregnant

Written by Jill Kerr Tepe

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Just as I bought my ticket for my first [Travel Bloggers Unite](#) conference in Umbria 2012, I also found out I was 6 weeks pregnant.



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I did the math quickly in my head and realized I would be 22 weeks pregnant at the time of travel, and wondered if I could indeed make the trip. After some internet searches and a talk with my OB/GYN, I decided to go for it, and I'm so glad I did! After all, my mom was also 5 months pregnant with me when she traveled to Hawaii, and my husband, Nick, had no problem with it. He had just one condition: he would join me. I spent two weeks on a whirlwind trip visiting Madrid, Lisbon, Assisi, Positano, Dallas and Santa Barbara. International travel is totally doable with a bun in the oven; you just need to follow a few guidelines.



### Doctor Knows Best

Before you purchase any tickets or book any rooms, have a realistic conversation with your doctor about your individual pregnancy and any risks specific to you. If the doctor thinks it's not the best idea, then you need to stay put. Make sure to get a copy of your medical records to keep with you in case of an emergency so that any physician abroad will know your history.

### Keep Your Timeline in Mind

Ideally, the second trimester is best for flying, because you're past the risky first trimester and yet not far along enough to worry about going into labor. Plus, your belly doesn't have its own gravitational pull at this point and makes it easier to get around.



### Fly Safely and Comfortably

I have to say I wasn't thrilled about flying Coach, sitting up trying to sleep on an overnight flight from Dallas to Madrid. I spoke to my doctor and he said Ambien was completely acceptable to take during pregnancy. The only risk it posed was sleeping for too long and needing to walk around to prevent blood clots. So I timed it so I would take half an Ambien and sleep four hours, then get up, walk around, use the restroom, then return to my seat and take the other half for another four hours' sleep. Another thing I did to prevent blood clots was wear over-the-knee compression socks. Not fashionable, but who cares? I just wore comfy leggings over top of

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them. I also included a sleep mask and inflatable neck pillow in my carry-on.



### **Wearever You Go**

It's hard to say what clothes to pack because that depends entirely on your location and the season, but what worked for me was leggings, a simple dress or tunic top, a pashmina and comfortable flats. I pretty much just sported a variation of this dress code everyday.

### **Drown Yourself in Water**

One thing any traveler battles is dehydration, which in pregnancy, is especially frowned upon. Drink so much water that you have to pee constantly (are you already doing that?) and that you think you will drown if you consume any more water. A bonus is that being super hydrated helps reduce jet lag.

### **Avoid the Dreaded Swelling**

I was not able to avoid it. My feet blew up like balloons. You might think it was from walking everywhere, but it actually happened during the second day of the conference after I sat for two days. I'm pretty sure it was a combination of way too much sodium and wearing heels one night...totally not worth it. I did have a doctor check me out just to make sure I wasn't at risk for blood clots, and everything was fine. My legs were just incredibly unsightly and uncomfortable.



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