



Guidelines for Traveling to "Away" Meets

As swimmers progress and qualify for meets, they may be required to travel with their family to meets such as TAGS, Sectionals, Senior Circuit and other elite meets. Here are some tips to help your swimmer have the best meet possible.

The keys to a good road trip are:

- Eat the proper foods
- Get plenty of rest
- Understand your swimmer's schedule
- Make sure you have everything you need

NUTRITION

The swimmer's diet should consist of low fat high carbohydrate foods. Appropriate breakfast foods are pancakes, bagels, French toast, cereal, and fruits. Pancakes and toast should be served without butter or margarine. Syrup and jams are OK. Drink low fat milk. Most hotel breakfasts serve a variety of foods that are good to eat before a meet. Make sure you understand the hotel's breakfast schedule and whether or not it coincides with your swimmer's morning schedule.

At lunch, avoid fried foods at fast food places. Try a salad with a minimum of dressing or a potato with a minimum of butter. Sandwiches with lean meat or skinless poultry are good. Peanut butter and jelly sandwiches are good and easy, but watch the peanut butter because it is high in fat. Soup and crackers are also fine, but avoid cream-based soups. Stay away from soft drinks and drink low fat milk or juices.

For dinner, if you are eating out, choose restaurants that offer high carbohydrate items such as pasta, salads, rice, vegetables and fruits. If you must have pizza, get one with a thicker crust and get low fat toppings like green peppers, onions, Canadian bacon or mushrooms. Avoid fatty meats and extra cheese.

Dining out cuts in to rest time. Many seasoned families forgo restaurants in favor of cooking in their hotel suite. Even if your room only has a microwave, you can pack pre-prepared meals and other refrigerated or frozen items that can be stored in your room fridge and heated up in the microwave. Be nutrition conscious at all meals. Remember: don't sacrifice great performances by eating conveniently while on the road.

THE SCHEDULE

Make sure you know what sessions your swimmer is in, and what the warm-up time is for each of those sessions and how to get from your hotel to the pool. Allow for traffic if it is during commute hours.

Understand that swim meets can be extra exhausting. While away from the pool, swimmers need to rest and relax. Napping between morning and afternoon sessions is a good idea. When swimming only in an afternoon session, swimmers may sleep a little later than usual. Do not allow swimmers to stay up late or run around socializing while at the hotel. This wastes important rest time as well as disturbing others.

During "free time" on the road, swimmers and parents should avoid excessive talking about the meet, particularly anything negative. Instead, think very positive thoughts for short periods of time. As always, praise the swimmer for their effort, rather than focusing on results

WHAT TO PACK

This differs for every family. Think about what it will take to make the swimmer and family comfortable and happy in a hotel for a few days.

Think about your schedule for the weekend, and your swimmer's usual swim meet needs and how to meet them when on the road. How many suits and towels do they like to take to a session, and will they dry in between morning and afternoon sessions? ALWAYS bring along a deck chair for the swimmer. Some facilities don't allow them, and this is usually mentioned in the meet info document, but it is always better to be over prepared. The same goes for extra caps, goggles and suits – they are often available for purchase at meets, but be prepared in case your swimmer loses something.

What kind of food does your swimmer like to have on deck? Not every meet has a snack bar with healthy options; make sure you are prepared to pack nutritious food and plenty of hydration.

A reminder: All swimmers and parents sign a Code of Conduct agreement as part of being on LAC. When you are travelling, you are representing our Team, as well as Swimmers and their families in general and we know you will make us proud.

Always remember, the main purpose of the trip is a swim meet, and the goal is for the swimmer to perform their best. Diet, rest, and attitude are keys to maintaining a "fresh feeling" through a tough, long meet. Remember these guidelines when you are on the road and minimize the effect of road trips on performance.