

Managing Symptoms While Away

From Home

Being away from home can affect symptoms for people living with Functional Neurological Disorder. Changes in routine, environment, pacing, and sensory input may influence how symptoms present during travel.

This toolkit focuses on **managing symptoms while away from home** in ways that respect variability, capacity, and safety. It is not a treatment guide and does not provide medical advice.

Recognizing Early Signs of Increased Strain

Symptoms may increase gradually rather than suddenly.

While away from home, it may help to notice:

- rising fatigue or reduced concentration
- increased sensitivity to noise, light, or movement
- changes in balance, coordination, or speech
- difficulty keeping pace with planned activities

Recognizing early signs can support timely adjustment.

Adjusting Pace During Travel

Travel often requires sustained effort.

It may be helpful to:

- slow down movement or transitions
- reduce the number of activities in a day
- allow extra time between tasks
- pause rather than push through increasing symptoms

Pacing supports steadier participation.

Using Familiar Supports When Possible

Familiar supports can help with regulation while away from home.

This may include:

- using usual mobility or sensory supports
- maintaining familiar routines where possible
- carrying items that support comfort or grounding

Familiarity can reduce strain in unfamiliar environments.

Responding to Symptom Changes Calmly

Symptom changes during travel can feel unsettling.

When symptoms increase, it may help to:

- acknowledge the change without immediate escalation
- adjust activity rather than abandon plans entirely
- focus on safety and comfort first

Symptom fluctuation during travel does not necessarily indicate harm.

Communicating Needs While Away

Clear communication can reduce stress when traveling with others.

It may help to:

- state when rest or a change of plan is needed
- explain limits without over-justifying
- agree in advance on how changes will be handled

Clear communication supports shared understanding.

Planning for Recovery Time During Travel

Recovery may be needed during a trip, not only afterward.

This may involve:

- scheduling quiet time between activities
- allowing flexibility for unplanned rest
- adjusting expectations for the remainder of the day

Recovery supports ongoing participation.

Knowing When to Pause or Stop

Managing symptoms includes knowing when to pause.

It is appropriate to:

- stop an activity if safety or capacity is affected
- return to a place of rest
- modify plans without self-judgment

Stopping is a form of management, not failure.

Supporting Symptom Management Away From Home

Managing symptoms while away from home involves awareness, pacing, and flexibility. When symptom changes are approached calmly and practically, travel can be more manageable and less destabilizing.

This toolkit is intended to support real-time symptom management while respecting individual limits and variability.

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