Managing Meds While on Vacation

March 18, 2011 By Aundaray Guess

I may get little sympathy from those who are reading this with no vacation in sight, but I just had to share my experience from the hell we sometimes call work.

I've always loved to travel, even when I was little. Even if it meant going to the next city or travel to the state even if it's across the river to New Jersey which is right across the border. What has changed since those early years is the fact that now I have to take into account the HIV medications I'm on.

Let me tell you it's hard. It's not hard to place them in your luggage and travel with them wherever you're traveling to. What is hard is trying to maintain the same schedule you had at home when you took your pills at your regular scheduled time. But c'mon vacations are not a time to be looking at the clock. Vacations are a time when you forget what time and day it is. When you let your hair, well maybe not in my case, but you don't maintain schedules.

For me the morning regimen has been easy because you don't have alchol in your system making you forget or you're out having fun and laughter with friends you just met or freinds you haven't seen for awhile as you sit eating food you wouldn't normally cook at home. In the middle of that fun it's hard to say, "can you excuse me for awhile while I go pop these meds." Then away you go to find some hidden room, usually the bathroom.

And of course taking pills takes planning ahead because while you're getting dressed to hit the town you're not really thinking of dispensing pills at that time. Where do they go? In the pants pocket where some accidently fall out while taking your hands out of your pocket.

So this had been a good week/bad week for me. Good in that I've been having a great time just getting away and forgetting about work and the hustle and the bustle and bad because on my week long trip I know I have missed at least three night time dosages. I can see my doctor shaking his head.

Another barrier which isn't so big but one that works for me is that in order for me not to gag when I take my pills I usually have to take them with chocolate milk. Everybody has their own system and yes mine is chocolate milk. It's weird because when I take them with water I'm 100% sure to choke. So if water is the only option I have to take them one at a time which is a drag. Even regular milk makes the pills not go down fully.

My doctor told me the reason that chocolate milk works is that when I first take a swallow, it coats my mouth so that when I swallow the pills it's like being on a slip and slide and down they go easy with no problems. So in the last few days recognizing that I'm missing pills I've stopped at the mini market and got my little bottle of milk waiting for me in the fridge.

But seriously I just want to go on a vacation and truly have it be a vacation and leave the regular home routine at home. But when you have HIV you don’t have that luxury. HIV never takes a vacation, unfortunatly.

But I have two more days of sun and fun and although my counts will be off some I’m also trying to give myself a real vacation. And yes the doc will be upset but a medication holiday, a brotha needs a break.

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