

SENIOR SAFETY TIPS

WITH SERGEANT BOB



Retired Police Sergeant Bob Paterson works closely with The McLennan Group Insurance Inc. to develop and share practical safety tips for Canadians 50-plus.

"Don't gamble with your safety. The stakes are too high."

Pickpockets: How Travellers Can Prevent Distraction Theft

The key to preventing any type of distraction theft - *pickpockets in particular* - is vigilance. But there's really no need to worry. These eight tips are designed to help make you and your companions more resilient and relaxed while travelling:



Leave your flashy, most valuable items at home.



Store valuables in upper layered inside pockets or zipped shoulder bags located in front of you - not behind or at your side, and never in rear pockets.



Make brief eye contact with people around you and behind your travel companions, especially in markets and transportation terminals, boarding bus steps, etc.



Think like a thief. They behave like predators; culling a herd, scanning for the most vulnerable. Be wary of people who are more concerned about you and your party than their own business. Situational awareness goes a long way in helping you enjoy your journey.



Carry small bills and coins for small purchases separate from a wad of cash.



Be wary at the ATM / cash counter. Use your own look out while withdrawing cash.



Be aware of the team approach: with a pickpocket, distractor, lookout and handoff to take the loot and leave the scene to remove evidence and blame.



If you've been bumped or pushed, or someone drops something beside you in a crowded place... you've just been distracted! Pickpockets can also be seeking the location of your valuables as you touch or check that storage location after a well-planned bump.

SO WHAT IS THE BOTTOM LINE?

The unusual searching and scanning of a pickpocket CAN be detected. If you feel uncomfortable, be on high alert and signal your travel companions. And remember that pickpockets are VERY aware that your vulnerability skyrockets after alcohol. Stay sharp and use the buddy system after a few drinks.



Please visit online for additional safety tips and a list of seminars for Canadians 50-plus.

Find Sergeant Bob Online: www.seniorsafetytips.ca