

FIRSTLIGHT HEALTH

Healthful Family Ties

Sesearchers from the University of California at San Francisco found heart patients with strong family ties recovered faster and experienced less depression and anxiety than those with weak bonds. "When ties are strong, the family helps monitor the care of the patient, including reminding her to eat appropriate foods, take medication, exercise, and reduce stress," says Sally Rankin, R.N., Ph.D., lead study author. "This love, support, and monitoring speed the recovery process." To strengthen family relationships, communicate regularly, get together often, and keep in mind that familial relationships are rarely perfect. For example, you might talk about nothing but local sports with your uncle, but at least you've made a connection. —Karen Asp

Dogs and cats can get sunburned, too—especially on their ears and noses. Be sure your light-colored pet has access to shade if he's outside. If your dog will be outdoors for long periods, ask your veterinarian about pet-friendly sunscreen. Any over-the-counter brand that doesn't contain zinc oxide, which can be harmful if licked, will work, says veterinarian John Tyler of Mississippi State University's College of Veterinary Medicine. If your pup develops a rash, stop using the lotion. If symptoms persist, see your vet.



EXPERT PICKS Travel Essentials



Rick Steves, author of Europe through the Back Door PICK: A pair of broken-in shoes, such as Rockport Whittington (\$125; 866-290-6431 or www.rockport.com)

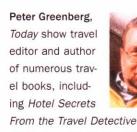
WHY: Many Americans buy their shoes just before they leave and

spend precious vacation days nursing blisters. I bring a well-broken-in pair of leather walking shoes that have a sturdy sole.

Micol Negrin, leader of food and wine tours of Italy (Read her article on Italian alfresco dining, "Out in the Open," at CookingLight.com/features.) PICK: Pack-Mate Storage Bags (\$4.50 to \$8.50; 800-852-7085 or

www.walkabouttravelgear.com) WHY: These are amazing space savers. You pack your clothes in the bags and roll them to force the air out, and your clothes take up much less

space. The bags also protect clothing from leaks, an important consideration if you're packing shampoo bottles or jars of food.



PICK: Sony World Band Radio
(\$159.95; 877-865-7669 or
www.sonystyle.com) WHY:
I always take a worldwide radio, which
can pick up radio
stations from
around the

can keep in touch and know what's going on, no matter where I happen to be at the moment. *-Cindy Hatcher*



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