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# First Date? Hints for Success!

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?Ah, the anticipation! However it may have developed, you are about to test the waters on a first date. It may have been a while since you've done so. You may be a bit nervous. Whether this is a blind date, a meeting arranged by friends, a personal ad rendezvous, or even a date with someone you have spoken to in person, there are some important factors to keep in mind. Watching your manners, choosing the right attire, handling the tab, conversation skills, even how to get a second date are things to consider.

Before we get there, though, and become preoccupied with our date, there is one crucial element to remember. Often in the preparation and anticipation, we can forget about #1. That's right, you – and your personal safety. I'm not suggesting we become obsessive about precautions, merely alert, aware, and prepared. For a first meeting, it is prudent to let a friend or family member know where you are meeting, how long you expect to be, and the name of your date. Touch base with your friend after the date as a courtesy.

If you are to be having a blind date or are meeting an internet date for the first time, it is best to keep personal information, such as the address of your residence, to yourself. For internet dates and dating service dates, be alert for any anomalies between the description the person gave and what you actually see and hear. Though not the norm, be leery of 'false advertising.' Use your own mode of transportation to arrive. Pick a public venue for this first meeting. Always carry some emergency cash in case you need a cab or want to pay your own way.

In today's world, we are blessed with a few technological devices that simplify meetings and safety precautions. One of the best self-protection devices, for dating or traveling, is the cellular phone. Cell phones are easy to carry. Many have a one-touch calling feature. By pressing and holding down one button, you can call a friend, even an emergency assistance number. Always be sure to charge the batteries on your cell phone before leaving for your rendezvous or date. Whether your car breaks down, you are running late, or you need to get out of a sticky situation, a cell phone can be worth its weight in gold. Use your instincts. If you feel uncomfortable on a date, phone a friend from the restroom. Have him or her call you back; it is reasonable to feign a reason for an emergency exit if you are ill at ease.

Very uncomfortable? Tell an employee at the restaurant or establishment. There is no need to be embarrassed. Be honest. In our fast-paced society, it is expected that every 'meet-and-greet' may not always go as planned. Be gracious, of course, but take smart precautions. Phone and ask a friend to meet you outside if need be.

That said, you are well-prepared to venture forth. Look forward to your date. Have reasonable expectations. Remember all the wonderful things you are and have to offer and go enjoyZZZ

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