

Traveling with Diabetes

Tips to help you plan and enjoy your upcoming travel.

How do I prepare for my trip?

- Visit your doctor for a check-up. Ask:
 - If you are fit for the trip.
 - How your planned activities could affect your diabetes and what to do.
 - How to adjust your insulin for different time zones.
 - If you need vaccines.
- Have medications ready.
 - Written prescriptions in case you lose them or run out.
 - Bring twice the medication and supplies you expect to use and keep them in their originally labeled packaging.
 - Get an insulated bag to protect your medication and strips from extreme temperatures.
 - Keep your medical supplies with you at all times and pack in carry on (not checked) luggage for flights.
- Gather your medical documents (see back page).
- Research local healthcare services near your destination. For international travels, go to iamat.org or contact the U.S. Embassy or Consulate near your destination.

How do I prepare for airport security?

- For information about airport screening, visit the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) website: tsa.gov or call TSA Cares: **855-787-2227**. On the website, you can locate and print a TSA notification card to describe your condition and hand to TSA staff at security.
- Consider the TSA Pre-check option for convenience (tsa.gov/precheck).
- If you wear a continuous glucose monitor or an insulin pump, inform TSA staff that you are wearing a medical device for diabetes that would be damaged in the body-scanning device. Ask for a different security check.

What can I do to stay healthy?

- If you have to sit for long periods of time, get up and move around every 1-2 hours to help prevent blood clots.
- Wear comfortable shoes and socks. Check feet daily for blisters, sores or areas of redness. Seek medical care if you develop any problems with your feet.
- Tell your travel partner(s) about your diabetes, signs of low blood sugar and how to treat it.
- Try to stick to your usual meal and physical activity routine.
 - Limit alcohol to 1-2 servings per day.
 - Have snacks on hand.
- Beat the heat. If the weather is warm, drink plenty of water—even if you are not thirsty. Check your blood sugar more often. Stay in the shade when you can. Wear sunscreen and a hat.

Travel Checklist

Medical and Personal Information

(Use documents or My Health Online.)

- Medication list.
- Prescriptions for insulin, syringes and other medications.
- Health insurance card.
- Emergency contact information, including your doctor and pharmacy.
- Medical identification bracelet. (Wear it!)

Diabetes Supplies

- Take twice the amount you will need of the following items: insulin, syringes or insulin pen, and cartridges.
- Glucose meter—put new batteries in before you go and bring extra. Take a spare meter if you have one.
- Test strips.
- Lancing device and lancets.
- Ketone test strips.
- Glucagon (if prescribed).
- Glucose tabs or gel, Lifesavers® candy, or other carbohydrates to treat low blood sugar.
- Insulated bag for insulin.

Beverages and Food

- Water—one or two 16-ounce bottles (after you go through security screening).
- Extra food in case meals are delayed.
- Snacks—Granola bars, pretzels, mini bagels, string cheese, crackers, fruit. Note that you can't bring fresh fruit or vegetables on flights to some locations. Ask about your flight.

First Aid and Other Medications

- Alcohol pads or another cleansing agent.
- Facial tissues.
- First aid supplies—adhesive bandages, gauze, ace bandages, antibiotic ointment, etc.
- Sharps container.
- Anti-nausea and anti-diarrhea pills.
- Cold pack.
- Pain medication—aspirin, acetaminophen (Tylenol®), ibuprofen (Advil®).

For Comfort

- Fanny pack or backpack to carry your supplies.
- Comfortable walking shoes.
- Comfortable socks.

Pump Users Should Also Carry:

- Extra batteries.
- Extra infusion sets, cartridges and occlusive dressings.
- IV Prep or other antibacterial cleanser.
- Antibiotic ointment.
- Back-up basal insulin and syringes—Lantus® or Levemir—especially if you do not have a back-up pump.
- Extra pump—check with the manufacturer as some may provide a loaner for international travel.