

# Traveling with diabetes

## Diabetes doesn't have to hold you back

If you like to travel, diabetes doesn't have to stop you. Yes, you'll have to take diabetes with you wherever you go. But with planning and knowledge, you can go pretty much wherever you wish.



## Plan ahead

- Make an appointment to see your diabetes care team a few weeks before you go. Make sure your ABCs—A1C, blood pressure, and cholesterol—are in a healthy range. Check to see that your immunizations are up to date. Get extra prescriptions for your diabetes medicines. And ask for a note explaining that you have diabetes
- Wear an identification band that says that you have diabetes. The information should be written in the language of every country you'll be visiting
- Plan for changes in time zones, schedules, and meals. Talk with your team about what those changes will mean to your diabetes care
- Make sure to let your diabetes care team know about any episodes of low blood sugar you have been experiencing

## What to pack

### No matter how you'll be traveling . . .

- Bring along more diabetes medicines and supplies than you would normally need
- Don't forget your blood and urine testing supplies (Include extra batteries for your blood sugar meter)
- Follow the instructions for use on your medicine. If you are taking extra medicines with you, pack them in a thermos bag with cold packs. With all your diabetes medicines, check and follow the instructions for storage
- Make sure you have your medical insurance cards. Take along the phone numbers for your diabetes care team as well

### If you're traveling by airplane . . .

- Carry all of your diabetes supplies in your carry-on luggage. That way you'll have them with you in case your checked bags get lost
- Bring your medicine in the original, labeled containers given to you by your pharmacy
- Be aware that airport security will allow you to take all diabetes-related medicine and supplies with you, such as:
  - Insulin pumps and supplies
  - Other injectable diabetes medicines
  - Emergency kit to be used for severe low blood sugar
  - A hard-surface container for used syringes
  - Liquids (including water or juice)



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## Avoiding changes in blood sugar

Travel may bring about changes in your blood sugar, even if it's usually within your target range. So check your blood sugar more often than you do at home. Talk with your diabetes care team about what you can do to decrease your risk of high blood sugar.

To reduce your risk of low blood sugar:

- Always bring emergency snacks with you. Include both rapid-acting and slow-acting carbs. Good choices include a snack pack of crackers and cheese, crackers and peanut butter, or a piece of fruit. In case your blood sugar drops, be sure to pack glucose tablets or hard candies that you can chew quickly

- If you're flying, keep your emergency snacks with you at your seat. Don't store them in the overhead bin. That way you can get to them easily
- Call ahead to find out if you will get a meal on your flight. You can request a diabetic meal. If you use mealtime insulin, wait until you see that your meal is about to be served before you take it. If meals are not available, you may want to pack one for the trip



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