

TRAVELLING AND DIABETES

Even though you are diabetic, you can still go to the same places as people who don't have diabetes. Whether you travel for business or pleasure, planning your trip in advance is essential if you have diabetes.

- Make sure your diabetes is under control.
- If you need to have any vaccinations, do it several weeks before you are due to leave so as to make sure that any reactions to the shots do not upset your blood sugar level while you are away from home.
- Take a medical report with you explaining that you are diabetic and describing the treatment you use and the equipment you need to control your illness (appliances to measure your blood sugar level, lancets, test strips, syringes, etc.).
- Try to learn a few phrases in the language of the country you are going to such as: "I am diabetic. Please call a doctor" and "I need some sugar or fruit juice, please." You can also write them down and take them with you.
- It can be useful to wear a bracelet or a chain round your neck with something written on it, in English or the language of the country you are going to, saying that you are diabetic.
- Make sure you take with you at least double the amount you normally need of insulin or pills and self-testing material. They may be hard to get in some situations or places.
- Always keep some food on you (a sandwich, fruit, biscuits, liquids). You might be a long way from anywhere you can get food if there is a hold-up or anything unexpected happens.
- Keep everything you might need (food, insulin, other medicines, sugar) with you in your hand luggage and make sure you are never separated from it. Never check it in if travelling by plane.
- It is advisable to keep your insulin in a fridge if the temperature during your journey is above 30 °C.
- If possible, travel with someone who can inject insulin, perform a blood sugar test and knows what to do in the event of an emergency.
- Try to get up and walk around every 2 or 3 hours during the journey and exercise your legs by raising and lowering them if you cannot do this.
- If you are driving, stop at the first sign of anything wrong (tiredness, nervous tension, sweating, etc.).



- In the case of long plane journeys, ask your doctor before you go about the best way to adapt your mealtimes and the times you inject yourself with insulin. You can keep your watch at the time of the place you leave from and have your meals and take your medication according to that time during the journey and then adjust them to local time when you get to your destination.
- Try to adapt your diet as far as possible to local food habits.
- It is a good idea to find out in advance about the health system, and medical cover, of the place you are going to in case you need to use it.