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Traveling with Diabetes

By Kyle McClure

[By taking certain precautions, you can enjoy your time away from home in a safe and healthy manner.](#)

Whether you're leaving on a jet plane or just taking a road trip for the weekend, it's important to remember that wherever you go, your diabetes goes with you. The good news is that, if you're diligent about managing your disease, you can go almost anywhere and do almost anything. So pack your bags and let's get ready to travel.

Know Before You Go

The National Diabetes Education Program recommends seeing your health care provider four to six weeks before your trip to make sure your **ABC's** (**A**1C blood glucose test, **B**lood pressure and **C**holesterol) are under control and in a healthy range before you leave.

Get all necessary immunizations on time. Nobody needs the complications associated with some of the nasty regional illnesses you could contract--especially not a diabetic.

Plan for time zone changes with regard to administering insulin shots or medications. A simple rule of thumb is this: eastward travel means a shorter day (so less insulin may be needed) and westward travel means a longer day (so more insulin may be needed.) The American Diabetes Association suggests that you meet with a diabetes educator to craft a precise schedule as different people may need to tailor their insulin injections in different ways.

If you are flying, find out how long the flight is and if and when the in-flight meal is served. Also check with the airline to see if they offer a low-sugar or diabetic meal.

Plan your trip activities ahead of time so you know when you'll be exercising or away from a place where you can get food or sugar in case your levels get low.

Let's Get Packing

Pack twice the amount of medication and supplies that you'd normally need.

Be sure to pack your medications and supplies in your carry-on bag with proper manufacturer's labels to avoid problems when you go through security.

Use insulated bags with refrigerated gel to keep your insulin cool.

Have your doctor write you a prescription for you medication as well as a letter explaining what you need to do for your diabetes (including a list of supplies you would need to treat it.) Check with the International Diabetes Federation at if you are going out of the country to understand prescription laws.

Have your ID bracelet on you at all times, which shows you have diabetes.

If you will be in a foreign country, learn how to say "I have diabetes" and "sugar or orange juice please" in the language or languages of the country you will visit.

Have snacks and some form of sugar to treat low blood sugar.

Bon Voyage!

Remember, if you are taking care of your diabetes and maintaining tight controls around your blood sugar, you are free to travel and enjoy the world. Safe travels and enjoy!

Source: Qualityhealth.com