

# Traveling with diabetes



Remember to make a plan for ensuring your next travel adventure is safe and successful.



## OVER-PACK MEDICATIONS

Gone for a week? Pack two weeks' worth of your diabetes medications in case of travel delays or misplaced supplies. Have a prescription from your doctor for insulin or oral medication in case of an emergency.



## PROTECT SUPPLIES

Keep your medications and supplies close at hand and don't put them in checked luggage or in the car trunk, where they can be exposed to harmful extreme temperatures. Use travel packs to keep insulin cool. If you're flying, keep them in the original packaging in a bag separate from your toiletries. TSA allows you to go over the 3.4 liquid-ounce carry-on limit for diabetes medications and supplies.

## IDENTIFY YOURSELF

Wear your medical bracelet or necklace that notes you have diabetes and take insulin. Carry a health card that includes your emergency contact and doctor's name and phone number. Learn how to say "I have diabetes," "sugar," and "orange juice, please" in the language of the country you are visiting.



## FAVOR YOUR FEET

Wear comfortable well-fitting shoes and socks at all times. Never go barefoot. Feet and ankles often swell during flights so consider wearing knee-high compression stockings or bring thinner socks to change into if your feet swell. Pointing and flexing your ankles during a flight can improve blood flow in your calf muscles and decrease swelling as well as lower the risk of blood clots.

## SIMPLIFY FLYING

Tell the TSA staff that you have diabetes (they're used to accommodating people with health issues). If you plan to inject insulin while flying, be forewarned—the pressurized air can make it more challenging to draw up your insulin, if using a vial and syringe, so be extra careful not to inject air into the bottle.



## TEST OFTEN

New foods, increased activity, and different time zones can throw your glucose levels out of whack, so be sure to test frequently, including before and after meals. If you take insulin, keeping your levels steady can be tricky when changing time zones, so make a plan to adjust your schedule for injecting. Before your trip, see your doctor or health care provider who can help you with this process.

## CARRY SNACKS & LOW BLOOD SUGAR TREATMENT

Low blood sugar (hypoglycemia) can strike any time and food access during travel is unpredictable, so be sure to bring plenty of snacks such as peanut butter crackers, granola bars, and trail mix as well as glucose tablets or gel.



## PREPARE FOR A HEALTH EMERGENCY

If you need medical treatment, ask your hotel or contact the nearest US embassy or consulate to recommend a local doctor who treats diabetes. Before you travel overseas, purchase travel medical insurance from a provider who can provide locations where you can obtain medical care in the areas you are traveling.