



## Getting ready for travelling

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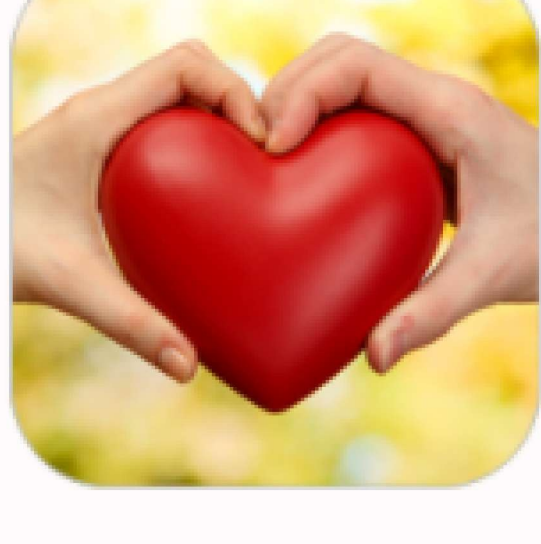
### References

## Overview



Thinking about going on a vacation but at the same time, worrying about your health conditions? You should not let this to restrain you; what you need to do are to consult your doctor beforehand and take a few extra steps in preparation for your trip to ensure you stay healthy during your travels. This article will provide you some tips to get you ready.

## For high blood pressure



### Before you go



- Bring sufficient (or extra) supply of your prescribed blood pressure medications
- Bring a blood pressure monitor
- Bring a heart rate monitor

### Sitting in the plane



- As high altitudes and sitting for a prolonged period can worsen your high blood pressure symptoms, you should stand up, stretch and move around the plane to avoid blood clots and swelling
- If possible, choose an aisle seat so that you can move around easily during the flight

### Diet



- Stay hydrated and reduce alcohol consumption
- Reduce sodium intake (eg, avoid salty foods and carbonated drinks)
- Avoid grapefruits, oranges and their juices (they can interact with your blood pressure medications)

### Activities



- Avoid adventurous activities that can cause sudden changes in your blood pressure (eg, scuba diving and parachuting).

Watch out for the following symptoms and warning signs during travel:



Migraine



Fatigue or confusion



Blurry vision



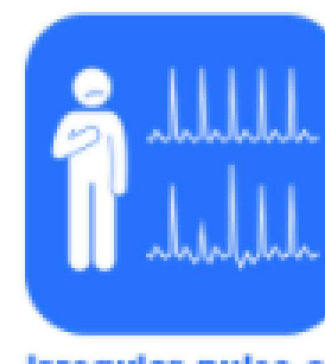
Shortness of breath



Pain, aching or pounding in chest, neck or ears



Blood in urine



Irregular pulse or heartbeat (>100 beats/minute or <50 beats/minute)

## For high cholesterol



### Before you go



- Bring sufficient (or extra) supply of your prescribed cholesterol-lowering medications

### Sitting in the plane



- Avoid sitting for a long period of time

### Diet



- Choose healthy foods (eg, fresh fruits, vegetables, whole grains and lean meats)
- Go for healthy snacks (eg, carrot slices, hummus, pita bread, nuts, apples and granola bars)
- Keep hydrated with water (not with sweetened beverages)

### Activities



- Staying active is the key to manage your high cholesterol, even when you are travelling
- Try to go for a brisk walk or a light jog every day
- You can also utilize your hotel gym or pool, or plan for a hike or sightseeing stroll

## For diabetes



### Before you go



- Get a medical identification from your doctor that states your condition, your doctor's name and phone number, and the list of currently prescribed medicines
- Discuss with your doctor if you need to adjust your insulin injection schedule if there are time zone changes of ≥2 hours
- Plan your immunization shots (if required) 3–4 weeks before your vacation. Some of these shots can affect your blood sugar levels
- Find out where you can get supplies of insulin at your destination, in case of emergency
- Bring sufficient (or extra) supply of your prescribed blood glucose-lowering medications
- Keep medicines, syringes and blood sugar testing supplies in your hand luggage (syringes is allowed through security for insulin users)
- Bring some type of sugar source, in case you develop hypoglycaemia
- Pack comfortable shoes (at least two pairs), socks, and a first aid kit to treat minor foot injuries (do not go barefoot to avoid injuries)

### At the airport and sitting in the plane



- Inform security that you have diabetes and that you are carrying medical supplies (must have a prescription label and manufacturer's label)
- Notify security if you are wearing an insulin pump and request that the meter not be removed
- If you need an insulin injection during your flight, follow your normal procedure, but put only half as much air into your insulin bottle as you normally would

### Diet



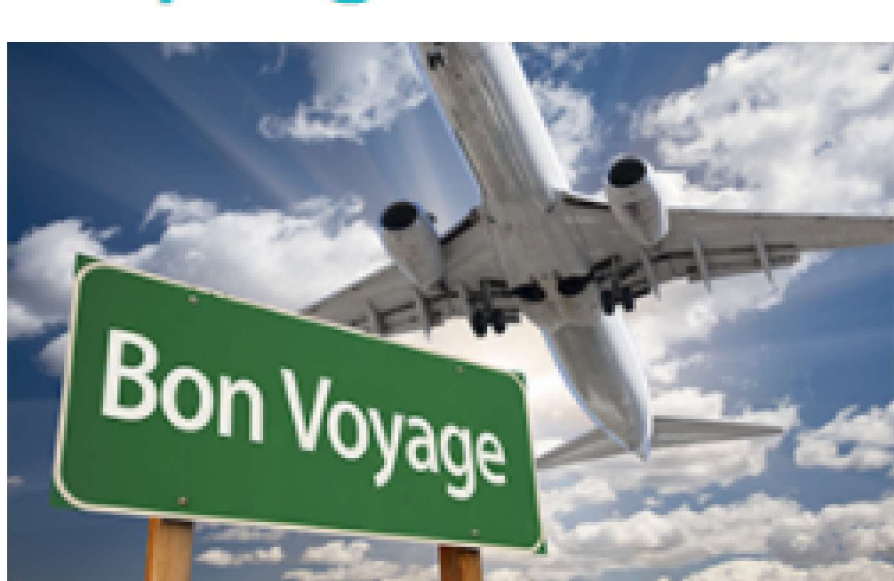
- May order standard food or request for special meals for diabetes if available
- Try to carry starchy carbohydrate foods, such as biscuits, cereal bars or fruit buns, in case of hypoglycaemia (blood glucose levels drop too low)
- Test your blood sugar more often than usual

### Activities



- Plan activities according to your medical condition
- Stay active but avoid long periods of sunbathing

## Coping with an emergency while abroad



Before you go, get advice from your doctor about what you can do if an emergency occurs. You can also get help from the tourist office, embassy or high commission of the country you are visiting. You may need to learn certain phrases in the local language such as "I need help" and "where is the hospital?".

With all the preparations, you are fit to fly!

## References

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