

# TRAVELING WITH DIABETES



Traveling to new places is fun but can also be disruptive to your diabetes management program. Glucose control can be affected by new time zones, different foods, delayed meals and more activity than usual. The following tips will make traveling with diabetes easier and more enjoyable.

## BEFORE YOU GO

- ✓ Check with your diabetes care team about adjusting insulin or other diabetes medications if you'll be spending time in a different time zone.
- ✓ Make sure to have extra medication to cover the time you're away for unforeseen circumstances.
- ✓ Get a letter from your provider stating the medical supplies you must carry to care for diabetes.
- ✓ Obtain and wear a diabetes medical identification necklace or bracelet.
- ✓ Consider travel insurance in case you should need to postpone or cancel the trip.
- ✓ If using an insulin pump, have a backup plan in the event of pump failure. Pump companies offer loaner insulin pumps for travel in case of failure. Program the loaner pump with the proper settings.

## PACKING

- ✓ Pack double the amount of medication you'll need while away. This includes vials of insulin or pens, insulin pump and sensor supplies, glucometer strips, and a backup glucometer.
- ✓ Don't forget Ketostix and extra batteries!
- ✓ If flying, keep diabetes supplies in your carry-on bag. Checked baggage can get too cold and affect insulin. Also, if luggage gets lost, you'll have the carry-on with your medications.
- ✓ People with diabetes are exempt from fluid restriction for medicine, as well as fast acting carbohydrates such as juice, and gel packs to keep insulin cool.
- ✓ Put glucose tablets and a snack in your carry-on bag to treat potential low blood glucose levels or in case of delayed meals.
- ✓ Carry a list of your medications in case of an emergency.

## DIABETES CENTER OF EXCELLENCE

AMBULATORY CARE CENTER (ACC), SECOND FLOOR  
55 LAKE AVENUE NORTH, WORCESTER, MA 01655

NEW PATIENTS: **855-UMASS-MD** (855-862-7763)

EXISTING PATIENTS: **508-334-3206**



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## WHILE TRAVELING

- Avoid letting supplies such as your meter, strips or pump get too hot. Never keep them in direct sunlight. Keep insulin in a cooler, but don't put it directly on the ice pack or ice.
- Have healthy snacks and water with you at all times on the road.

## DURING YOUR TRIP

- Glucose levels may be out of target range when you arrive, especially if changing time zones, but it should adjust within a day or two.
- With increased activity, blood glucose levels could go low. Adjust medication or food intake to help prevent that.
- Exploring new foods can be fun, however, watch portion sizes and make sure your plate includes vegetables, carbohydrates and protein.

- Stand up and walk every few hours while flying or driving to prevent blood clots.
- Consider setting an alarm as a reminder to take your medications.

- If drinking alcohol, review our Alcohol and Diabetes info sheet.
- Carry wipes or hand sanitizer to clean your hands before checking blood glucose.
- Avoid walking barefoot.
- Use sunscreen.
- Stay hydrated.

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