

Traveling Tips When Your Child Has Diabetes



Whether you're going to Hawaii or to grandma's house, vacations are supposed to be fun. They can mean a break from the routine of work or school — but not from diabetes. Still, diabetes should not stop you from traveling and enjoying it, but there are a few things that you need to consider to ensure a safe and enjoyable time for you and your child.

Your Diabetes Travel Checklist

When you're traveling with a child with diabetes, there are a lot of important things you'll need to bring with you. By using this checklist, you can be prepared and ensure you don't forget anything important.

When you and your child with diabetes travel, make sure to bring:

- Insulin
- Insulin syringes/pen needles
- Insulin pump supplies
- CGM (continuous glucose monitoring) supplies

- Written down pump settings
- Blood glucose meter
- Blood glucose meter strips
- Control solution
- Lancets & lancet device
- Ketostix
- Alcohol wipes
- Batteries
- Emergency phone #s
- Medical Alert ID
- Glucagon kit
- Carbs to treat low blood sugar
- Extra snacks
- Log book
- Sharps container
- Ice pack
- Diabetes travel kit
- A current insurance card

Storage Of Supplies

Be sure to always carry all of your supplies with you. Almost all of them should be kept between 40-85°F. You can purchase a diabetes travel kit just for this purpose. It can also be helpful to have the pharmacy labels on all of your supplies, especially if you're flying.

You should carry enough supplies to last the entire trip — plus a few extra days. You need to carry extra prescriptions for all of your supplies in case any items get lost, stolen, or break.

Airline Travel

Always carry all of your supplies in your carry-on bags. Items can be damaged or lost if you pack them in your checked luggage. You can also check TSA's regulations on traveling with medications.

If your child uses an insulin pump or a CGM, ask security to visually inspect it as it should not go through the X-ray machine. It should be safe to go through the metal detector.

Preparing For Your Travel

Some components of travel may cause your child to experience low blood sugar (hypoglycemia) or high blood sugar (hyperglycemia). There are ways you can prepare — but you should also be prepared for the unexpected!

High Blood Sugar

Traveling can require a lot of sitting in the car, plane, or train — and this lack of activity can cause the blood sugars to rise. Make sure your child drinks plenty of fluids to help prevent this.

Low Blood Sugar

Carry liquids and easy to eat carbohydrates (juice, regular soda, glucose tablets, or gel) in case your child's blood sugar drops. Always keep these easily at hand or in your carry-on bag.

Educate your traveling partners — such as family members and friends — to recognize and treat low blood sugar. Always carry Glucagon with you in case of an emergency.

Time Zone Changes

Traveling between time zones can be confusing if you're trying to manage a medication schedule. If there is a change in time zones of two hours or more and your child uses:

- **An insulin pump:** Be sure to write down all of the pump settings in case the pump screen goes blank or the memory is accidentally erased. Then, simply change the clock on the pump to the local time when you arrive at your destination.
- **Injections:** Give the Lantus/Levemir/Basaglar/Tresiba dose at the time you would take it at home, not the local time. For Humalog/NovoLog/Apidra, take your doses as usual based on local time with your meals.

Do you still have questions about managing your child's diabetes while traveling? Contact the diabetes team at Children's Diabetes Center, Children's Hospital & Medical Center at 402-955-3871 for more information about keeping your child safe while you travel.

Visit us online at www.childrensomaha.org/diabetes