

Traveling with Infusion Medications and Supplies

Introduction

A little preparation can go a long way when you are traveling from home with infusion medications and supplies. This booklet provides helpful tips and important instructions for domestic travel. It should be used along with instructions from your home care provider.

Consult Your Health Care Prescriber

Ask your prescriber if travel is permitted while undergoing treatment and what problems you might face. Find out if your prescriber will be available by phone during your trip. In the event of a problem, you and the health care providers at the destination hospital will want to reach a prescriber who is familiar with your medical history. The prescriber's phone number, your medical history and other vital information should be carried with you.

Ask your prescriber to write a letter explaining your need for the infusion medication and supplies you are bringing with you. Pack a copy of the letter in each box of supplies, and carry one on you to share with travel officials. If your prescriber is not able to give you a letter before your trip, ask your pharmacist to do so, and to give you a copy of the prescription along with the letter.

Prepare for Emergencies

Have a plan of action for emergencies. Locate the nearest medical center or community hospital in the destination area. Ask your prescriber if he or she knows a prescriber familiar with your therapy at your destination. Discuss with your prescriber what steps to take if you become ill or experience difficulties with your therapy while travelling away from home.

Supply Needs

Prepare a list of supplies well ahead of time. This will help you avoid overlooking any items. Pack a few extras in case of loss or damage. Talk to your home care pharmacist about a backup plan in case you have trouble with your infusion device when you are traveling.

Work with Your Home Care Pharmacist

Your home care pharmacist may have an office or an affiliate in your destination area that can deliver medications and supplies to you if needed.

If your supplies will be shipped to a hotel, explain to the hotel staff how to handle the package properly especially if it requires refrigeration. It is best to do this when you make your reservation to ensure they can accommodate your request and then to verify the information a SECOND time the day you expect the shipment to arrive.

No matter how you choose to ship your medications and supplies, planning ahead and coordinating your efforts with your home care pharmacist can make this process a lot smoother and is well worth the extra effort.

Maintaining Storage Temperature

Refrigeration of your infusion medication can be tricky when traveling. Place the containers (mini-bags, cassettes, or elastomeric "balloon" devices) into a re-sealable zip lock bag. Place those sealed bags on cooling packs inside a plastic or Styrofoam cooler, then cover them with ice. Close the cooler with a tight fitting cover. If shipping your medications to your destination, place the cooler in another shipping box.

Don't forget to re-cool your cooling packs in the freezer whenever you have the opportunity. When making a hotel reservation, be sure they can guarantee a refrigerator in your room. When your hotel doesn't offer refrigeration, use ice to keep the medication cool.

It may be helpful to place a small inexpensive thermometer in the cooler to ensure that your medication stays within 2-8 degrees Celsius/35-46 degrees Fahrenheit at all times.

U.S. Commercial Air Travel

The Transportation Security Administration (TSA) Cares is a helpline that assists travelers with disabilities and medical conditions.

Travelers may call TSA Cares toll free at 1-855-787-2227 prior to traveling with questions about screening policies, procedures and what to expect at the security checkpoint. TSA Cares will serve as an additional, dedicated resource specifically for passengers with disabilities, medical conditions or other circumstances or their loved ones who want to prepare for the screening process prior to flying.

The hours of operation for the TSA Cares helpline are Monday through Friday 8 a.m. – 11 p.m. EST and weekends and Holidays 9 a.m. – 8 p.m. EST.

When a passenger with a disability or medical condition calls TSA Cares, a representative will provide assistance, either with information about screening that is relevant to the passenger's specific disability or medical condition, or the passenger may be referred to disability experts at TSA.

TSA recommends that passengers call three (3) days before travel so that TSA Cares has the opportunity to coordinate checkpoint support with a TSA Customer Service Manager located at the airport.

Passengers with disabilities and medical conditions are not required to provide medical documentation to an officer; however, many passengers find it helpful to have medical documentation as a way to discreetly communicate information about their needs to an officer.

Medically Necessary Liquids

Medically necessary liquids are allowed through a checkpoint in any amount once they have been screened; however, it is recommended that passengers limit the amount of liquid to what is reasonably necessary for his or her flight. Passengers should inform an officer if a liquid or gel is medically necessary and separate it from other belongings before screening begins.

Liquids, gels, and aerosols are screened by X-ray and medically necessary items in excess of 3.4 ounces will receive additional screening. A passenger could be asked to open the liquid or gel for additional screening. TSA will not touch the liquid or gel during this process. If the passenger does not want a liquid, gel, or aerosol X-rayed or opened for additional screening, he or she should inform the officer before screening begins. Additional screening of the passenger and his or her property may be required, which may include a "pat down".

Packaging required to transport medically necessary liquids, gels, and aerosols cool – such as freezer packs or frozen gel packs – are permitted through the screening checkpoint and may be subject to additional screening. These accessories are treated as liquids unless they are frozen solid at the checkpoint. If these accessories are partially frozen or slushy, they are subject to the same screening as other liquids and gels.

Supplies that are associated with medically necessary liquids and gels – such as IV bags, pumps and syringes – are allowed through a checkpoint once they have been screened by X-ray or inspection. The passenger should declare these items to an officer and separate them from other belongings for screening.

For additional information, please visit the TSA Traveler Information Webpage: <http://www.tsa.gov/traveler-information>.

A helpful video is available [here](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P1ebivKv4dl). <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P1ebivKv4dl>

Notes and Instructions: