

# Travel Tips for Children with Type 1 Diabetes

**Your child can still have a great trip, even with Type 1 diabetes. Here are some tips on how to prepare for a trip, manage insulin when changing time zones, managing insulin at the beach or amusement park and traveling outside of the United States.**

## PREPARING FOR YOUR TRIP

- If your child is flying, ask for a travel note from your child's doctor or nurse. Airlines should allow you to take diabetes supplies on the plane, but it's always good to have a note for security, just in case.
- Pack diabetes supplies in carry-on luggage. That way, you'll be sure that your child's diabetes supplies with him or her at the destination.
- Your child should wear his or her medical alert bracelet or necklace.
- It is best to disconnect your child's insulin pump during takeoff and landing because the changes in air pressure can affect the insulin delivery. **Remember to reconnect the pump after takeoff and landing!**

## SUPPLIES FOR THE AIRPLANE

- Blood glucose meter, test strips and lancets
- Short-acting insulin (Humalog®, NovoLog® or Apidra®) and syringes or pen needles
- Basal-acting insulin (Levemir®, Lantus® or NPH)
- Ketone meter and/or urine ketone strips
- Hypoglycemia supplies, like:
  - Fast-acting carbs, like glucose tablets or glucagon
  - Other food, if there is delayed flight
- If your child has a pump, bring:
  - Extra batteries and infusion sets
  - Syringes to fill the reservoir and in case of pump failure

## HOW TO GIVE BASAL INSULIN WHEN YOU ARE CHANGING TIME ZONES

- If your child has a pump, reset the time on the pump to the new time zone when he or she arrives at the destination. Reset it to your home time zone when your child returns.
- If your child takes long-acting basal insulin every 24 hours, he or she should continue to take it every 24 hours. This means your child will need to take his or her next dose in the new time zone.
- If you wish, you can change the time ahead or back by an hour every day to get to a time that is convenient for you and your child. He or she could take insulin at 8 a.m. one day, 7 a.m. the next and at 6 a.m. the day after. It might be more convenient to begin adjusting the timing before leaving for the trip. This way is best for trips where time zones are only a few hours apart.
- There are other ways you can use to adjust the timing of insulin when changing times zones. Your child's diabetes team can help come up with a personalized plan.

## FUN AT YOUR DESTINATION

### Fun in the Sun

- While insulin doesn't need to be refrigerated, extreme changes in temperature can lower the strength of the insulin.
- Storing insulin in a cooler is best. Keep insulin out of direct sunlight at the beach or in the car.
- If your child is going to be in the water and disconnected from his or her pump for much of the day, you might want to give him or her a basal insulin injection to provide insulin for 24 hours. You can also disconnect the pump from your child for an hour or so before reconnecting.
- Consider changing to a new vial of insulin if you notice that your child has high blood sugar levels that are not coming down as expected with typical insulin doses. The insulin might have been exposed to extreme temperatures.

### At the Amusement Park

- Consider the advice above about the heat and disconnecting from the pump.
- Insulin pumps should be disconnected for fast rides and rides that involve going upside-down.

## TRAVELING OUTSIDE THE UNITED STATES

- Be sure to bring extra supplies. Some equipment, supplies or types of insulin might not be readily available at your destination. Your child's diabetes team cannot prescribe internationally.
- Have an emergency plan of where to find help or whom to contact in an emergency.
- Be sure to use U-100 insulin. Insulin in the United States is U100 (100 units per millileter). Insulin outside of the United States could also be U-40 (40 units per milliliter).

**If you have questions, we want to hear from you. Contact us at (617)726-2909. Bon Voyage!**

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