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PROMOTING HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

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Wellness Wednesdays

JULY, 2025 WEEK 1

ON THE GO WITH DIABETES: Smart Travel Starts with a Plan

When you are living with diabetes, everyday management is part of your routine. But when your routine shifts, whether you're headed to the airport, hopping in the car, or spending the day sightseeing, planning becomes even more important.

The good news: with a few smart steps, you can manage your condition safely and comfortably, no matter how far from home your travels take you.

Pack with purpose

Before you leave, take time to organize what you will need, and pack more than you think you'll use. Travel delays and time zone changes can disrupt your usual schedule, so having a buffer is key. Recommended Packing List:

- Medications, insulin, and any oral diabetes drugs
- Blood glucose meter or continuous glucose monitor (CGM), plus batteries or chargers
- Extra test strips, lancets, alcohol swabs, and sharps containers
- Glucose tablets or snacks to treat low blood sugar
- Cooler or insulated bag if any medication needs to stay cold
- Copies of your prescriptions in case of emergency
- A doctor's note explaining your condition and prescribed meds you are traveling with

Always keep your diabetes supplies in your carry-on bag – never in checked luggage. Temperature and handling changes can affect your medications.

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What to Know About Airport Travel

TSA allows passengers with diabetes to bring their supplies on board, including insulin, syringes, pumps, and snacks. You can also request a visual inspection of your devices and supplies if you prefer not to send them through the X-ray scanner while going through security.

Another tip: tell the security officer ahead of time and separate these items from your other belongings. You are not required to remove your insulin pump or CGM during screening. More details on what you can bring, and your rights as a passenger, are available through the CLICK OR TAP! **American Diabetes Association's Know Your Rights** guidance for air travel.

Time Zone Tips & Meal Planning

Crossing time zones can affect your medication schedule. Speak with your doctor before your trip to adjust scheduling if needed, especially if you take insulin. While traveling:

- Stick to your regular meal and snack timing when possible
- Keep healthy options like trail mix, cheese sticks, or fruit handy for delays
- Be cautious with new foods that are higher in sugar, sodium, or fat than you're used to
- Watch your hydration and carry a refillable water bottle to sip from regularly

If you will be more active than usual, monitor your blood sugar more frequently. Long walks, swimming, and excursions can all impact how your body uses insulin.

Car Trips & Outdoor Adventures

If a road trip is on your summer bucket list, no worries! Plan rest stops where you can stretch, check your blood sugar, and eat a balanced meal. Sitting for long periods without checking in can increase the risk for high or low glucose levels.

When spending time outdoors, be aware that hot weather can affect your blood sugar. Heat can also damage medications and equipment. Avoid leaving supplies in a hot car, and store insulin in a shaded, cool place.

Support On the Go

Blue Cross Blue Shield Illinois resources are available wherever you are. Log in to CLICK OR TAP! **Blue Access for Members** to find:

- Virtual health care support if you need guidance while away
- Pharmacy tools and refill options
- Nutritional tips and condition management tools

If you are not certain what is covered when traveling, check your plan before your trip or call the Health Advocate number on the back of your Blue Cross Blue Shield Illinois member ID card.

Wherever this summer takes you be it traveling locally, nationally, or internationally, preparation is the key to managing diabetes with confidence. By packing your essentials, planning meals, and staying mindful of your routine, you won't miss a beat this season.

SOURCES: *American Diabetes Association*, *Rahman et. al.*, *Dong et. al.*, *Johns Hopkins Medicine*, *CDC*

Share this article with your colleagues so they too can safely hit the road this summer!