

Strategies for Traveling When You Have Diabetes

Traveling is something that everyone does from time to time.

Whether for business or pleasure, by plane, train, or car, you can effectively manage your diabetes when you're on the go.

You may want to contact your health insurance company and ask them what to do if you become sick on your trip.

Get their recommendations in writing, along with any contact information, just in case there's a problem.

Wearing your medical ID is especially important when you're on a trip, so that if you need help, others can more easily see that you have diabetes.

If you are traveling by plane and take diabetes medications, carry your prescription with you and pack your medications in your carry-on bag so that you have them if your luggage gets lost.

When you're "on the road," there are many obstacles to good diabetes management, like trying to exercise and eat well.

When making your reservations for plane or train travel, explain that you have diabetes ask for an entire list of entrees, and prearrange to have the healthiest one for you.

If your airline does not serve an in-flight meal make sure you eat before-hand or buy or make a meal or snack to take with you.

And apply your dining out skills as needed.

Remember to look at the menu when dining out. Look for nutritional information right on the menu so you can make healthier choices.

For example: some menus include light or heart healthy selections that are specially marked. The amount of fat, carbohydrate and calories may be listed.

Ask your server what healthy menu items they recommend. Don't be afraid to ask how food is prepared. Or to ask for it to be prepared in a healthier way for you. Most restaurants are happy to do this.

Ask to have your fish or chicken entrée grilled, broiled or baked instead of fried. And have your vegetables steamed or lightly sautéed rather than covered in a creamy or cheesy sauce.

To control your portion size, eat the correct portion size for you and take the rest back to your hotel room if there is an in-room kitchen for safe reheating and eating at a later time. Or split an entrée with your dining companion.

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If you'll be traveling a long distance by car, stop every few hours to stretch. If you're on a train or plane, get up and walk around.

Many hotels and resorts have fitness centers, so that you can continue to exercise even when you're away from home.

Or you may be able to fit exercise into your tourist activities---like walking while sightseeing.

Just remember to take along sunscreen, a hat, extra socks and good walking shoes to protect your skin and feet.

While you're traveling you can take a break from your everyday routine, but not from your diabetes. Make healthy choices when you're on the road to keep your blood glucose in your target range. You'll feel better and have a better trip.