

# MAKE PLANS, DON'T TRIP!



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**T**ravelling overseas presents problems to those with chronic medical conditions, including people with diabetes and particularly those on insulin. Nonetheless, the fear of dealing with acute complications and medications should not hamper people with diabetes from travelling, whether it is for work or pleasure. That is why planning ahead can help prevent or minimise emergencies that may occur away from home.

## Before you leave

Learn how to count carbohydrates to help you be more flexible with meals. Consult your doctor at least one month before your trip to discuss your holiday plans. Meet your dietician to plan your meals as well.

## Carbohydrate Meal Plan Guidelines

	Per Meal	Per Snack if needed
Female, not overweight	45g-60g (9-12 teaspoons of sugar)	15g-30g (3-6 teaspoons of sugar)
Male, not overweight	60g-75g (12-15 teaspoons of sugar)	15g-30g (3-6 teaspoons of sugar)

## Carbohydrate Counting

- 100% of carbohydrate is converted to sugar.
- 5g of carbohydrate = 1 teaspoon of sugar
- The amount of carbohydrate (sugar) intake should be consistent.

## Medication and supplies on your travel

Unforeseen circumstances may arise during your travel e.g. flight delays. Bring extra supplies of medication or insulin in case of emergencies. Do carry extra diabetes supplies such as glucometers, test strips, extra batteries for your glucometer and lancets. Make a list of the names of the drugs. Get a memo from the doctor indicating that you have diabetes and must hand-carry medication and medical supplies to manage your condition. Include oral medications for hypertension, diarrhoea, motion sickness, etc. Bring also in your carry-on-bag a snack of crackers, bread, fruit and candy or glucose tablets to treat low blood glucose. A copy of your prescription is essential in case your insulin becomes unusable due to extreme temperatures.

If you are on insulin, do keep track of shots and meals through changing time zones. A small supplementary injection of insulin may be needed if blood sugar is high. It is also advisable to check your blood sugar more frequently when you travel. It is necessary to adjust your drug dosage in accordance with your food and fluid intake as advised by your healthcare provider.

## Protect Your Feet During Travel

Choose shoes that are comfortable. Shake shoes out and feel inside before you put them on. Look for objects, torn places, or other things that might hurt your feet.

Do not go barefoot. If the shoes do not fit right or cause reddened spots, corns or blisters, do not wear them. Wear clean, soft cotton or wool socks.

Wear socks that fit well and do not have holes, patches or repairs. Stockings or hose should also fit well. Do not wear round garters, rubber bands, or knee-highs with a tight elastic band.

Always wear socks or stockings with shoes. Use a sunscreen on the top of your feet to prevent burns when you are out in the sun. Finally, see a doctor if you notice any foot problems.

Source: Lilly.(n.d.). Feet. Managing Your Diabetes. Eli Lilly and Company