

DIALYSIS TRAVEL PLANNING

A checklist for safe, confident travel while on dialysis

You can travel on dialysis. The key is planning: most units need **several weeks' notice** to arrange treatments away from home, and spots fill quickly around holidays and in summer. Start as early as you can, and **check with your own care team first**.

1 Talk with your care team (6 to 8 weeks ahead)

- | | |
|--|--|
| ☐ Ask my nephrologist whether my health is stable enough for this trip and this length of time. | ☐ Ask about fluid and diet plans for long trips, hot weather, or flights. |
| ☐ Tell my home unit my dates and where I am going; ask what the unit needs from me. | ☐ Ask which vaccines or travel health advice apply to my destination. |
| ☐ Ask how to schedule treatments around travel days (never skip a session). | ☐ Ask my social worker for a list of dialysis centers at my destination. |

2 Find and book treatment away from home

- | | |
|---|--|
| ☐ Choose dialysis centers near where I will stay; have a backup center too. | ☐ Ask what they require: recent labs, hepatitis B results, treatment orders, medicine list, insurance info. |
| ☐ Call each center: ask about open chairs, treatment times, and how much notice they need (often 30 days or more). | ☐ Have my home unit send my records and orders, and confirm they arrived. |
| ☐ Send my request early; holiday and summer weeks fill up first. | ☐ Get treatment dates and times confirmed in writing. |

3 Insurance and money

- | | |
|--|--|
| ☐ Call my insurer: is dialysis covered away from home? Is the center in network? | ☐ If traveling abroad, ask about travel insurance that covers pre-existing conditions and medical evacuation. |
| ☐ Ask about copays, deposits, or upfront payment at the new center. | ☐ Keep copies of receipts and forms. |
| ☐ Remember: Medicare generally does not cover dialysis outside the United States. Plan for private payment or travel insurance. | ☐ Ask my social worker about help with travel costs. |

4 Medicines and supplies

- | | |
|---|--|
| ☐ Refill all prescriptions; carry extra for a few days beyond my trip. | ☐ Ask about phosphate binders, blood pressure medicines, and what to take on dialysis days. |
| ☐ Keep medicines in original labeled bottles in my carry-on. | ☐ Pack a pill organizer and a cool pack if medicines need refrigeration. |
| ☐ Bring an up-to-date list with names, doses, and what each is for. | ☐ If I dialyze at home, arrange supply deliveries to my destination weeks in advance. |

ON THE ROAD: PACK, EAT, AND STAY SAFE

Finish the checklist and get ready to go

5 Diet, fluid, and health on the road

- | | |
|---|--|
| ☐ Follow my fluid limit; measure a daily amount in a travel bottle. | ☐ Stand up and move during long trips; wear compression socks if advised. |
| ☐ Plan low-sodium, kidney-friendly meals and snacks; avoid salt substitutes. | ☐ Weigh myself each morning; note big changes. |
| ☐ Choose safe water and foods, and avoid ice from unsafe water sources. | ☐ Do not skip or shorten treatments to "make up" time. |

6 Pack this

- | | |
|---|---|
| ☐ Medicine list and all medicines (carry-on) | ☐ Snacks that fit my diet, and a fluid bottle |
| ☐ Dialysis orders, recent labs, and access information | ☐ Sweater or blanket for chilly dialysis rooms |
| ☐ Emergency contacts and unit phone numbers | ☐ Blood pressure cuff for my non-access arm, if I use one |
| ☐ Insurance cards, photo ID, and travel insurance papers | ☐ Medical ID bracelet or card, and a short letter from my doctor |

7 Travel day and coming home

- | | |
|--|--|
| ☐ Carry documents and medicines in my carry-on, never in checked bags. | ☐ Keep my emergency card handy (see the Access Warning Signs sheet). |
| ☐ Tell security about medical supplies and liquids. Keep them in original containers. | ☐ Arrive in time for my first treatment, and go to every scheduled session. |
| ☐ Do not lift heavy bags with my access arm; ask for help. | ☐ Ask my away unit to send records home after each treatment. |
| ☐ Know the nearest emergency room and dialysis center at my destination. | ☐ Schedule my first treatment back home before I leave. |

Good to know

Cruises, camps, and remote places: ask if dialysis is available, and book early. For **home dialysis**, ask your supplier about travel kits, portable options, and delivery. Plan for power and clean water.

My trip information

Destination, dates	_____	Dialysis center phone	_____
Treatment days	_____	Nearest hospital	_____
Home unit phone	_____	Insurance phone	_____