

Travelling with Diabetes

Diabetics have to be especially careful when going on holidays. There are various things to **consider** when planning for the holiday. The most important thing is a plan of action for the medication and its transport.

The hormone insulin should not be **exposed** to extremes of temperature, that is, neither to extreme heat nor to extreme cold. There are lots of medical product companies that have specially **insulated** compact containers that are suitable for transporting not only insulin but also **syringes, vials** and any other essential equipment. When travelling by car, which generally takes longer than air travel, it is absolutely essential that insulin be kept at the correct temperature. It may be necessary to contact

the **manufacturer** or supplier to ask about their transport specifications well **in advance** of going on holiday. So for your customer the best place to start the holiday is at the pharmacy.

Pharmacy customer: Hello.

PTA: Hello. How may I help you?

My husband and I are going on holiday in a few weeks and I need a few things to take with me. I have a list here.

Thank you. I'll just put it together for you. Oh, I see you have a question mark next to blood-testing. Are you a diabetic?

That's right! It's good that you asked. You see I haven't had type 1 diabetes very long and it's my first time travelling a longer distance since having been diagnosed. As you can imagine, I'm very unsure.

Are you travelling by car or are you flying to your destination?

We're flying.

Okay, so you need a **safe means** of transporting your insulin and other equipment with you.

Can't I just pack it carefully in my luggage?

No, that is not at all to be recommended.

Why not?

For several reasons really. One of them is that the insulin will most likely freeze in the cargo hold of the plane and another reason is the risk of the luggage not getting to your holiday destination with you.

My goodness, I didn't know that! It's all still so new to me you see. I'm so unsure what to do.

That's not a problem, we're here to help! Do you have a letter from your **GP** stating that you are a diabetic and need the various medication connected with diabetes?

No, is that necessary?

Certainly! You need to get your blood-testing machine, your syringes and last but not least your insulin through the security control at the airport!

Oh, right. Eh, yeah.

Your doctor will probably provide a short checklist with the letter. This should include an **explanation** of which type of insulin administration you use, you know pump or syringe and **cartridge**, and **lancing device** for pricking the finger before testing.

Good. I'll do that. Is there anything else?

Yes, you should always make sure that you have your **hypo treatment** with you. Some **short-acting carbohydrate**, you know? It's also a good idea to put your insulin in a clear plastic bag for when you go through security. After that you can put it in a small insulated container so that you can transport it coolly and safely.

I think I'll contact the airline and ask them, too. Thank you so much for your help.

Here are your purchases. Goodbye.

Goodbye! ■

*Catherine Croghan,
Lecturer in English and native speaker*

VOCABULARY

consider	betrachten, in Betracht ziehen
exposed	ausgesetzt
insulated	isoliert
syringes	Spritzen
vials	Ampullen, Phiolen
manufacturer	Hersteller
in advance	im Voraus
safe means	sicheres Mittel
GP = general practitioner	Hausarzt
explanation	Erklärung
cartridge	Patrone, Karpule
lancing device	Stechhilfe
hypo treatment	(hier) glukosehaltige Notfallpackung
short-acting	kurzfristig wirkend
hypoglycaemia	Unterzuckerung
carbohydrates	Kohlenhydrate