



Preparing for Travel Checklist

Talk to Your PH Care Provider

- Notify your provider before any planned trips. You might need additional authorization to ensure you have enough medication in advance. Also, you might need to provide information to an airline or durable medical equipment (DME) company to get the oxygen devices you need for your trip.
- Obtain a letter from your provider describing pulmonary hypertension and your specific medical needs.
- If you are traveling to (or through) a high-altitude area, you might require supplemental oxygen. Keep in mind that travel to high altitudes may make your PH symptoms worse.
- Discuss with your health care provider hydration, diuretics and dietary restrictions related to your planned activities and air travel, which can cause your body to retain excess water.
- Ensure you are up to date on all vaccinations and immunizations, especially vaccines required for travel outside the United States. A list can be found on the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) website at [CDC.Gov/Travel](https://www.cdc.gov/travel).
- Ask your provider about prescriptions for as-needed relief of traveler's diarrhea, motion sickness or nausea and vomiting.
- Collect all important medical documents in a single place (folder, binder, etc.), and always keep them with you during travel.
- Consider sharing medically relevant information pertaining to your travel plans with your caregiver or a travel companion.

Medication Considerations

- Talk to your specialty pharmacy about getting enough medication for the planned length of your trip, plus extra doses, in case of travel delays. Also, be sure you have enough medication upon your return home.
- Be sure your medication list is updated and bring it with you on your trip. Your specialty pharmacy can help ensure that it's accurate. Make sure you understand your medication schedule in the time zones where you will be traveling and maintain it on your trip.
- Create an emergency plan in case of illness during your trip. Include medication-specific info (i.e. **Do not stop continuous infusions** under any circumstance.).

While on Your Trip

- ALWAYS adhere to your medication regimen, and DO NOT change your doses during your trip without a PH specialist's approval.**
- If you are in a high-altitude area and struggling to breathe, it is important that you get back to sea level as soon as possible. If that is not possible, go to the nearest hospital to get help.
- In case of illness or hospitalization, immediately ask the physician to notify your PH physician (make sure to have the emergency contact number for your doctor and specialty pharmacy.**
- Take all your medications and supplies with you when leaving your hotel or cruise ship for an activity.
- If you have an infusion line, avoid activities that may risk dislodging your line. Also avoid activities that may increase the blood pressure in your lungs. Examples include zip lining, cliff diving or swimming.
- Rest when you need to rest, and don't feel pressured to do every activity that you may have had in mind. Your health must come first.

PH Care Team: _____

Phone Number: _____

Specialty Pharmacy: _____

Phone Number: _____

Things to Consider When Choosing Your Destination

- If you are considering international travel, ensure that you have enough medication for your entire trip and potential travel delays. Additionally, research border crossing regulations and necessary paperwork required to carry medications with you, such as a letter from your doctor or a copy of a prescription.
- If you are considering a cruise, ask the cruise line what medical services are available on the ship. Research what medical care is available at the stops along the way. In case of an emergency, note your travel route and how much time there will be between destinations in case you need to get to shore for medical care.
- If you are on a continuous infusion medication, ask if the cruise ship has medical personnel trained in placing IV catheters in case of emergency or loss of use of the central line catheter.
- Consider equipment needed or that may be helpful at your travel destination, such as a wheelchair or scooter. Contact your local durable medical equipment (DME) company to assist with the rental of any equipment that you may need during your travel.
- If you are planning a long road trip, consider:
 - Planning breaks for the bathroom, walking and resting.
 - Packing healthy (low sodium) snacks and enough water based on recommendations from your PH care team.
 - Wearing compression socks.
- Pack oxygen tanks in a safe manner to travel. Some people use pool flotation noodles or pillows to allow cushioning between oxygen tanks in the trunk or back of the car.
- Check with your insurance company for coverage options while you are traveling. You might need out-of-network care, which could require additional authorization. (The doctor at the facility providing your care while you are traveling might not contract with your health insurance company.)
- Find PH centers close to your travel destination(s). Write their contact information below. *

Center #1: _____

Address: _____

Phone Number: _____

Provider Name: _____

Center #2: _____

Address: _____

Phone Number: _____

Provider Name: _____

**PHA offers a directory of PH-treating physicians that you can search for treatment centers by location. Visit PHAssociation.org/Patients/DoctorsWhoTreatPH to search near your travel destination(s).*

Making Reservations

- Ask your airline, hotel, cruise line, etc. about their cancellation policies and consider buying travel insurance to protect your purchases and get the maximum-allowed refund in case an emergency prevents you from going on your trip.
- When booking a hotel stay, request a larger disability room to accommodate extra equipment such as a wheelchair or oxygen. These usually are available for the same price as a standard room. Remember to request that when you make your reservation and NOT at check-in.
- Request a refrigerator, freezer and/or ice packs in your room for medications that need to be stored at a specific temperature.

PREPARING FOR AIRLINE TRAVEL

If You Use Oxygen

- Contact your airline(s) you will use as far in advance of your trip as possible. Different airlines have different requirements for traveling with portable oxygen including medical forms that must be completed and requirements for the number of batteries you can bring.
- Contact your durable medical equipment (DME) company to rent a portable oxygen concentrator and carry-on equipment and to secure additional oxygen and/or equipment that you may need at your destination.
- Pack enough batteries and back-up batteries in your carry-on luggage for 150% of the predicted length of your flight (roundtrip). Batteries and back-up batteries must be in your carry-on luggage. The Department of Transportation prohibits lithium batteries in checked baggage.

Prior to Your Flight

- Notify the airline ahead of time of walking restrictions to ensure that strenuous activity can be avoided upon arrival. Ask the airline in advance for a wheelchair to help you get to the gate.
- Prepare to have all medications and medical supplies (aside from empty oxygen tanks if applicable) that should be carried onto the plane in their labeled prescription bottles, not checked with baggage.
- Ensure you plan ahead. Make all arrangements and pack in advance so you can rest the day before your trip. Then, you will have more energy for traveling.

Day of Your Flight

- Consider wearing compression stockings.
- Follow the instructions that were provided by the airline to expedite check-in and avoid having to wait in long lines. If you need wheelchair assistance at the airport, be sure to tell the check-in agents or remind them if you made advance arrangements.
- Limit the amount of baggage that you will carry on by checking bags. Have someone do the heavy lifting for your other items.
- Maintain circulation and reduce swelling by limiting the amount of time spent sitting on the plane without moving. Move your legs and stand up and move around as you are able while on the flight.

Notes

