

Pediatric Endocrinology Associates

Mario I. Brakin, MD, FAAP - Pablito G. Nagpala, MD, PhD

Juliana Austin, MD, FAAP - Rebecca A. Hicks, MD, FAAP

(562) 595-0166 Fax (562) 595-6714

Travel for Children with Diabetes

Patient with diabetes should not let diabetes control the aspect of their lives that it does not need to control. Please do not let diabetes get in the way of traveling to see relatives or for other important reasons.

If you are flying domestically, simply declaring that you/your child have diabetes is usually enough to allow you to get through security without much hassle. To see a list of diabetes-related items that the TSA routinely allows for people with diabetes, please go to the TSA website or use the following link: <http://tsa.gov/traveler-information/passengers-diabetes>

If you are leaving the country, it is a good idea to request a letter from your doctor on official letterhead that states your child's medical condition and the medical treatment that he or she receives. Carrying their documentation of your child's medical condition with you can be very helpful at customs or when going through security checkpoints. Insurance cards are another must-have.

Take some time to make a list of all the medications and supplies that will be necessary to have on your trip, including Glucagon and back-up supplies. It is also a good idea to bring a cooler as you travel. While you are at our office, it is a good idea to ask for samples of back-up insulin and supplies in case you may need them when out of town. This will also help to prevent emergent situations should you be unable to return home when planned.

When flying, make sure to always keep your child's insulin with you in your carry-on luggage. Checked bags may be exposed to extreme temperatures that can ruin the insulin. X-rays should not affect blood sugar meters or insulin, but if you are concerned about this or if you are using an insulin pump, it is generally recommended to ask for a manual screening. If you/your child are on a special diet, you should notify the airline ahead of time (usually at least 24 hours in advanced) to request a special meal for your child, or just bring your own food. It is wise to have snacks on hand in case of low blood sugars or delayed flight times, regardless.

If you are driving for your vacation, it is good idea to have plenty of snacks and drinks available, preferably packed in a cooler in case the vehicle becomes too hot. If you are going to be away from your vehicle for long periods of time, it is a good idea to take the insulin with you to avoid overheating.

Planning ahead is the best way to ensure a safe and healthy trip for your child with diabetes.