

Travel Tips For Adults with CF

Planning is necessary for anyone travelling, however when travelling with cystic fibrosis (CF), there will be a few more things to take into consideration to ensure things go as smoothly as possible.

Reciprocal Health Care Agreements

The Australian Government has agreements with certain countries to cover some essential treatments and medicines. If there is no [reciprocal health agreement](#) with the country you are entering, you should:

- Ensure you are well before you enter into that country.
- Have a plan should you get sick e.g. travel home quickly or to a country that has a reciprocal health policy.
- Take plenty of precautions e.g. be strict with hand washing and hygiene.
- Take out health insurance. If you only get general health cover, and not cover for CF, and you require medical treatment there, it could be very expensive.

Travel Insurance

Getting travel insurance with a chronic illness like CF isn't straight forward. To cover your health, you will need to seek out insurance that covers a 'pre-existing health condition' (PEC).

Travel insurance companies who may cover CF are:

- Allianz Direct
- Aussie Travel Cover
- City Bond Sure Travel
- CGU Travel Insurance



- Columbus Direct
- Cover More Travel Insurance
- QBE Travel Insurance
- Southern Cross Travel Insurance
- World Nomads

Tips when seeking insurance:

- Call and ask different travel insurance companies whether they will cover you.
- Get a letter from your CF specialist with details of your state of health, a list of your current medications and your treatment plan to assist you.
- Ask your travel agent or an insurance broker if they can get you covered.
- [The Insurance Council of Australia](#) can work to assist you if you have questions about gaining travel insurance with a pre-existing health condition.

Health Preparation

It is important that you have a full health check with your CF team prior to travelling. You will be able to discuss areas of concern and ensure you are in the best

health possible before travelling.

You should also:

- Obtain prescriptions for medications you will need whilst away.
- Get letters from the clinic explaining diagnosis, medications including those nebulised; especially if requiring a compressor or insulin, and possible treatments for an exacerbation. Copy these and prescriptions and leave in several places.
- Take your CF clinic contact details with you.
- Research the location of the local CF clinic at your destination.

Please note, travel nebulisers are available for loan in some states. Check with your CF organisation.

Medications

It is important to make sure you have all the required medications you will need throughout your trip, prior to travelling as some countries may not stock particular medications. It is suggested to take an extra one-week supply in case of unavoidable extended delay (e.g. volcanic ash).

Pack medications and prescriptions in your hand luggage and an extra supply in checked baggage and keep them all in their original packaging. You should also notify the airline well before travelling if needing to use any needles or other devices on the plane.

If you have medications that need to be kept cool, you may need to look into purchasing a good pharmaceutical grade ice pack for long distance travel. The [FRIO cooling wallet](#) is a good option.

Flights

Oxygen levels on flights can be reduced so it's important to discuss this with your CF team to see if this is something that might affect you. If oxygen is required it needs to be requested at least two weeks

in advance from the airline. Your CF clinic can assist with this.

Wheel chairs are also an option and can be made available by the airline if given adequate notice. Allow extra time to check in if this is required.

Eating, Drinking and Cross-Infection

Water and food precautions are important when travelling to reduce the risk of infection.

It is important to:

- Follow good hand hygiene by regularly washing your hands and using hand sanitiser.
- Use bottled or cooled boiled water if unsure of local drinking water.
- Avoid ice cubes, juice mixes and other sources of possible contaminated water.
- Take electrolytes or salt tablets in hot climates.
- Wash all fruit and vegetables with a safe source of water or eat fruits with a peel.
- Avoid food from street stalls and kiosks
- Avoid non-pasteurised foods e.g. milk, yoghurt etc.
- Watch alcohol intake as it may make antibiotics ineffective.

Useful Resources

- [The Cystic Fibrosis Traveller's Guide to Nutrition \(NEMO\)](#)
- [Travelling with Cystic Fibrosis \(CF Buzz\)](#)
- [Smart Traveller](#)
- [CFWA Factsheets](#)

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