

Be Prepared



Diabetes

Whether you have Type I or Type II diabetes, your condition can make taking on an international assignment a bit more of a challenge.

Cigna Global Health Benefits is here to help. This brochure and the services we provide can help you enjoy your assignment and make the transition to your destination easier.



Before you go.



Check in with your physician.

Think about the types of challenges you might face. Do a little research, make a list and then talk about the food, labeling, medication, and any cultural differences that could affect you.

Get it in writing.

Ask your doctor for a letter that explains your diabetes medications, supplies, and anything else that a physician will need to treat you.

Find a physician that fits.

Go to [CignaEnvoy.com](https://www.cignaenvoy.com) to search for a doctor in the area you'll be living in. Or simply call the International Service Center using the number on the back of your Cigna ID card. Once you find a doctor, make an appointment so you can meet him or her upon arrival.

Ask for 6-12 months' worth of prescriptions.

Some drugs may not be available in the country you're traveling to—and insulin may be offered in different dosages and with different syringes. Most Cigna plans cover a year's worth of medication, which helps you avoid any hassles with getting them filled while on assignment.

Know your meds.

Log on to [CignaEnvoy.com](https://www.cignaenvoy.com) to find out the generic and local brand names of your medications. Then find out if the medications you take are available where you are going.

Travel smart.

Speak with your doctor in advance. You may need to make adjustments to your meal schedule and consider how your travel and time changes will affect your oral medication or insulin dosage.

Keep your condition top of mind.

You may have a handle on your condition while you're at home, but with the excitement and thrill of travel come a few more risk factors. Travelers in some areas are more likely to experience food-borne illnesses that cause stomach issues and dehydration. Your doctor at home can recommend an antibiotic treatment and a drug that fights nausea and vomiting in case you get sick.

7 ways to travel worry-free!

- If you need immunization shots, get them well in advance of your travel. They can upset your blood sugar.
- Call the airline ahead and request a special meal.
- Notify airport security in advance if you are wearing an insulin pump and request that the device not be removed.
- Find out what is allowed in your carry-on. Make sure you can bring a stock of syringes, blood glucose testing supplies, and oral medication.
- Bring along a small insulated travel container to protect your medications from extreme temperatures during your flight.
- If you are insulin dependent, pack a glucagon emergency kit. (Be sure to bring a prescription note to avoid hassles with security and customs.)
- Ask your doctor about taking regular insulin even if you don't normally use it. It can be an efficient way to handle short-term issues.



While you're there.

Test your glucose levels often.

You'll want to watch your glucose levels more than usual until you adjust to the new time zones, unusual foods and other changes as you travel and adapt to your new life.

Think before you eat.

Making healthy food choices in a new culture may prove to be a challenge. Have fun with it. Sample lots of new veggies, whole grains, fish and lean meats whenever possible. Remember, all of the food rules that apply at home travel with you.

Exercise to reach and maintain a healthy weight.

Watching what you eat is just one of the keys to controlling your weight. Carve out some time to exercise regularly. Living in a new country gives you a great reason to walk, explore and enjoy your new surroundings.

Take good care of your feet.

You depend on them every day, so please, be kind to your feet. Don't go barefoot, no matter how tempting the situation. Any minor cut, bump or abrasion can become a major issue if left untreated. If you have any doubt, have a doctor check it out.

Prepare for an emergency.

Know the names of the best hospitals in your region and keep a card with their names and addresses in the local language. The card should also say whether you are a Type I or Type II diabetic and list the name of an emergency contact. Also, be sure to learn about the local emergency response system in advance.

Remember, you are never alone.

Cigna is here for you anytime, 24/7/365. Send secure e-mail through [CignaEnvoy.com](https://www.cignaenvoy.com) or call the International Service Center using the number on the back of your card. Whether you're dealing with a true health emergency or simply need a referral, we'll help you get the care and information you need.

More Tips

- Be sure to pack your medications in a clear, resealable bag.
- Keep a quick-acting source of glucose plus a snack bar on hand to quickly treat low blood sugar.
- When traveling, pack crackers, cheese, peanut butter, fruit, juice or a piece of candy to treat low blood sugar levels.
- Be sure to wear a medical ID bracelet in the language of the country you are in.
- If you need an insulin pump or other supplies, reach out to Cigna for a list of International Web sites that can ship directly to you.



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