



Safe Travels



travel tips

Before you fly, drive or set sail, prepare!

- Read "Preparing to Travel" for important information to help you make traveling as stress-free as possible.
- Ask your adult congenital heart disease (ACHD) team for medicine refills.
- Ask for a letter detailing your medical history or obtain a copy of the note from your last clinic visit.
- Ask about any limitations or restrictions.

Airplane Travel

- Oxygen levels are lower than normal at flying altitude. This can cause shortness of breath. Check with the airline **before** you book a flight to arrange for oxygen, if needed, and to ask if you need a letter from your doctor saying it's safe for you to fly. Ask if the airline has its own form you need to complete.
- If you are flying for more than 4 hours, you are at risk of getting a blood clot (deep vein thrombosis, or DVT). Ask your doctor if you need compression stockings. Also:
 - try to sit in an aisle seat to stretch and move your legs
 - get up at least every 2 hours and walk up and down the aisles for up to 10 minutes
 - do leg and ankle exercises in your seat.
- The air in an airplane is dry. This can cause dehydration. Drink lots of water. Avoid alcohol. Avoid coffee, tea and soft drinks that have caffeine.
- Avoid sitting in the bulkhead seats. Although they offer extra leg room, you would be responsible for helping passengers in case of emergency.



MINNEAPOLIS
HEART
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Medicines, Implanted Devices and Airport Security

- Have your doctor's letter detailing your medicine, special equipment or implanted devices. Keep one copy in your carry-on bag and one copy in your checked luggage.
- Keep your medicines in their original containers with their original labels. Put them in a plastic bag to get through security.
- Put your medicines in your carry-on bag(s). Do not pack them in your checked luggage.
- Have a copy of your medicine list with you. Keep a second copy in your checked luggage.
- If you are traveling to another country, check with that country's American Embassy or Consulate to see if you can carry your medicines with you. Learn more at travel.state.gov.
- Tell the security screener if you have a pacemaker or defibrillator. Make sure to have your device ID with you. Do not let security use a hand-held metal detector over your device. If you are pulled aside for a security check, ask to be hand-searched.

Boat Travel

- Contact the cruise line **before** you book your cruise and find out if ship offers:
 - pharmacy and lab services (including X-rays)
 - oxygen and pulse oximeters
 - basic medical equipment (such as EKGs machines, heart monitors, pacing equipment and AEDs)
 - foods for special diets
 - 24-hour emergency care
 - a helicopter pad for emergency evacuation.
- Ask the location and hours of the medical facility onboard.



Car Travel

- You may be able to get disability parking certificates if you have trouble walking. Apply at dmv.org/mn-minnesota/disabled-drivers.php.
- If you are driving or riding in a car for a long time, you are at risk getting a blood clot (deep vein thrombosis). Ask your doctor if you need compression stockings.
- Get out of the car at least every 2 hours and walk for up to 10 minutes. Ask your doctor about exercises you can do if you can't walk.

