

TRAVEL AND EPILEPSY

FACT SHEET



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Travel can be an exciting and rewarding experience. Most people with epilepsy can travel safely and confidently, especially with a little planning.

This factsheet offers helpful tips to reduce seizure risks and make your journey smoother.

Documents and planning



- Make copies of key documents and store them separately from the originals in a waterproof pouch. Leave extra copies with someone you trust in Australia.
- Include emergency contacts (e.g. next of kin) and local emergency numbers for each country you're visiting.
- Share your itinerary with family or friends and check in regularly if you're away for a long time.
- Know where the nearest Australian Consulate or High Commission is in each country.
- Update your will if needed.
- Carry a letter from your doctor outlining your seizure type and prescribed medications. This can help at Customs or if you need medical care.
- Keep medications in their original packaging with your name and prescription details clearly visible.
- Know the emergency services number for each country you'll visit.

Preparing for the Trip



Seizure Triggers

Travel can be tiring, emotional, or stressful—all of which may trigger seizures. Plan for rest before, during, and after your trip. If you're flying across time zones, talk to your doctor about managing jet lag.

Flying

- Check airline policies on fitness to fly and medical clearance. These vary between airlines.
- Let the airline know about your epilepsy when booking. This helps cabin crew support you if a seizure occurs.
- Medical clearance may be needed if you've had recent seizures. Some airlines won't allow travel within 24 hours of a seizure.

Vaccinations

Visit your doctor or a travel clinic well in advance to discuss vaccinations and any effects they may have on your epilepsy or medications.



Always know the emergency services contact details in the country you are visiting.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

Health Care & Insurance

Look into health care standards in the countries you're visiting, especially if your seizures are not well controlled.

Get travel insurance - it's essential. Epilepsy is considered a pre-existing condition, so premiums may be higher. Be honest when completing disclosure forms. If you don't declare your epilepsy, your claim may be denied.

Medications & Safety

Check medication availability overseas. Some medications may have different names or formulations. Contact the pharmaceutical company for details.

Pack enough medication for the entire trip. Carry it in original containers and split your supply between checked and carry-on luggage.

Talk to your doctor about how to access more medication if you're travelling long-term.

Include other medications or supplements in your planning - even over-the-counter or complementary therapies may need documentation.

Medical ID

Wearing a medical ID bracelet is a simple way to help others help you in an emergency.

Seizure Support

If you're likely to have seizures while travelling:

- Travel with someone who understands your condition
- Join a guided tour with a trip leader who can assist if needed

Driving Overseas

If you plan to drive, check local laws about epilepsy and driving. Rules vary widely, and driving may not be permitted in some countries.

During the Flight

- Adjust medication timing if crossing time zones. Space doses evenly (e.g. every 12 hours) ask your doctor for advice.
- Avoid alcohol and recreational drugs.
- Stick to regular sleep patterns to reduce seizure risk. Consider a stopover for long flights.
- Stay hydrated and drink plenty of water.

Water & Hygiene Abroad

- Check if tap water is safe. Contaminated water can cause vomiting or diarrhoea, which may affect how your medication is absorbed.
- Protect your health in crowded places. Eat well, rest, and avoid getting sick or run down.
- Pack a travel first aid kit with hand sanitiser, wipes, hydration products, and anti-nausea medication. A travel clinic can help you tailor your kit.

SUMMARY

Travelling with epilepsy is completely doable, with a little bit of extra planning. By checking off some pre-travel steps – doctor, medications, documents, insurance, and health advice – you'll set yourself up for a safer and more relaxed journey. Planning ahead helps you think about potential problems, find solutions early, and reduce stress so you can relax and enjoy your trip.

Remember:

1. Plan ahead. Talk to your doctor before you go, and make sure you have enough medication packed in your carry-on (plus extras!).
2. Keep track of your meds. Stick to your medication times, set phone alarms, especially if you're crossing time zones.
3. Stay rested and hydrated. Get good sleep, drink plenty of water, and eat regular meals to help prevent seizures.
4. Be prepared. Carry a medical ID, doctor's letter, seizure plan, and emergency contacts, just in case.
5. Travel smart. Know your triggers, pace yourself, and make sure travel companions know what to do if you have a seizure.

When you're getting ready for a trip - whether a short road trip, or an international adventure - think about how you'll get there and what could make travel easier for you.

Further information

[How to manage your PBS medication overseas](#)

[Reciprocal health care agreements](#)

[Smart Traveller](#)

[The Travel Doctor](#)

[Travel Medicine](#)

[For people coming to Australia](#)



Contact us on:

Phone: 1300 37 45 37

Email: epilepsy@epilepsy.org.au

[Book a telehealth appointment with an epilepsy nurse](#)

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Disclaimer: This information is given to provide accurate, general information about epilepsy. Medical information and knowledge changes rapidly and you should consult your doctor for more detailed information. This is not medical advice, and you should not make any medication or treatment changes without consulting your doctor.