



HeartKids

# Travel and Trips

Information about preparing for travel and trips for people with childhood heart disease.

## Can I go travelling?

Your heart condition does not have to be a barrier to seeing the world. It may mean you have to think about some extra things before you leave. Making a travel checklist can help you do this.



## Making a travel checklist

- **Organise travel insurance.** Choose an insurance policy that covers your pre-existing heart condition.
- **Check for extra vaccinations.** Sometimes you will need special vaccinations when you travel to another country. Ask your doctor if you need any extra vaccinations before you go.
- **Plan your medications.** Pack extra medication for your trip in case there is a delay in your travel plans.
- **Take photos of prescriptions and medications.** Have a plan for how you would get more medication at your destination if you lose it while on your trip.
- **Create a list of health services at your destination.** Find out who you can talk to at your destination if you need medical advice.



## Talking to your doctor before you leave

Your doctor can help you with your travel checklist.

You can ask them about:

- **A plan.** If something happens to you overseas, it's a good idea to have a plan for what you would do. Your doctor will be able to provide some advice that you can write down.
- **A medical certificate.** Sometimes you'll need to have a medical certificate to take your medications on a plane (especially if you have needles or additional oxygen). Ask your doctor if you will need to let the airline know anything before you travel.
- **Warfarin.** If you are on Warfarin, talk to your doctor about where and how you can get your INR checked. Find out who will be able to help you with what dose to take.

## Why do I need travel insurance?

Medical care can be extremely expensive overseas. Travel insurance can help you to pay for medical expenses if you need to visit a doctor or hospital while you are away.

In some countries, getting medical care is more difficult if you don't have insurance.

Travel insurance can also help you to pay for other things like flight cancellations and lost luggage.

## How do I choose a travel insurance policy?

When choosing a policy, it's important to find out what it includes and what it does not include.

Many standard travel insurance policies do not include cover for pre-existing conditions. Be careful of 'free' travel insurance policies that come with credit cards or holiday packages.



When researching travel insurance, look for a policy that covers pre-existing conditions like childhood heart disease.

## How do I apply for travel insurance?

Take your time to fill out the forms. The insurance company may ask you to complete a medical assessment.

Tell them about your heart condition and fill out the forms honestly. If you do not tell them about your condition, they may refuse to pay your claims. Your insurance provider should list your pre-existing condition in writing and agree to cover it.

This fact sheet was reviewed and updated by HeartKids in March 2021. It was endorsed by our Clinical Advisory Committee at the time of publication. Clinical information might change after this date. The information in this fact sheet is general. It is not a substitute for medical advice from your doctor. Always talk to your doctor about matters that affect your health.

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## Where to find more information and support

### Smart Traveller

 [smartraveller.gov.au](https://smartraveller.gov.au)

Travel information and advice to help Australians stay safe overseas.

### HeartKids

 [heartkids.org.au](https://heartkids.org.au)

Learn more about CHD and the support HeartKids can offer you.

 1800 432 785

Call the HeartKids Helpline for support, advice and guidance.

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