

Planning your trip:

Let your nephrologist (kidney doctor) and your kidney clinic team know your plans ahead of time. Find out if your kidneys are healthy enough for you to travel. **Discuss your trip with your team before you buy airline tickets or make travel plans.**

Before travelling to other countries:

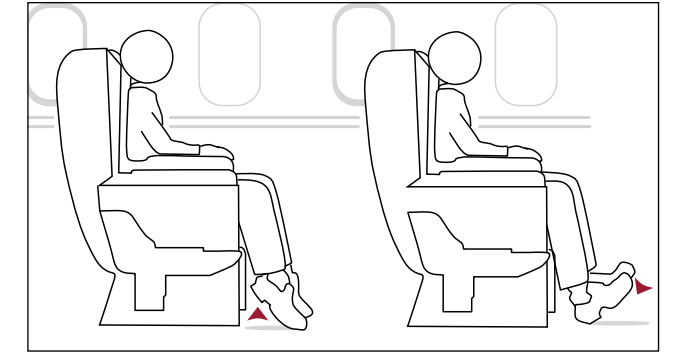
- Check with your travel agent to ensure you have all the proper documents for your trip eg. passport, visa, return ticket. Many countries have new regulations.
- Purchase travel medical insurance that covers “pre-existing” conditions. This includes your kidney disease and any unexpected, related costs.
- This insurance will help you feel secure while you travel as any emergency medical costs will be covered.
- Check your own extended medical coverage to see if it covers pre-existing medical conditions while travelling.
- Your BC Medical Services Plan only covers your basic medical insurance for a six-month absence from the province. After that you would lose your basic medical coverage.
- When you return you have **two months** to send in an “Out of Country” Claims Form to MSP for a refund, if you have medical costs.
- Carry a letter explaining your health and medications. The Kidney Clinic can give you one. Carry the telephone numbers of your family doctor, kidney doctor and the Kidney Clinic in case you need to make contact.
- Have you had hepatitis A and B vaccinations? **Discuss as early as possible with your Kidney Clinic nurse.** Check with your local community health unit, family doctor or the Travel Clinic four to six weeks before you travel to discuss **other immunizations and preventative medication. (eg. Anti-malarials).** Extra charges may apply. (<http://travelclinic.vancouver.bc.ca>).
 - Vancouver Coastal Health Authority Community Health:
http://www.vch.ca/community/community_health_centres.htm
 - Fraser Health Authority Public Health:
<http://www.fraserhealth.ca/About/Facilities/Facilities-List.asp>

Staying healthy:

- When flying remember to:
 - Drink lots of water to avoid dehydration.
 - Keep your blood moving by walking up and down the aisles at least once every hour, wiggle your toes and flex your ankles. You may also want to try the exercises on the following page. **Note: Do not perform these exercises if they cause you any pain or are difficult for you to do.**



Ankle turns: Lift your feet off the floor and move your toes in a circle, one foot moving clockwise and the other foot moving counter-clockwise. Then change direction. Move about 15 seconds in each direction.



Foot lifts: Place your heels on the floor and bring your toes up as high as you can. Then put both feet back flat on the floor. Pull your heels up while keeping the balls of your feet on the floor. Do this exercise in a series of 30 seconds each.



Knee lifts: While keeping your knee bent, raise your leg while tensing your thigh muscle. Then do the same with your other leg. Repeat 20 to 30 times .



Shoulder circles: Raise your shoulders up and then move them forward, downward and then backward in a smooth circular movement.

- Consider using a medical alert device, such as a bracelet:
 - www.medicalert.ca (1-800-668-1507)
 - www.tinman.com/life (1-888-543-3253)
 - www.medinfochip.com
- Talk to your family doctor if you are concerned about travelling and your general health.
- What is the health care like at your destination? Get some information.
- If you become ill while on vacation seek medical attention. Good health helps protect your kidneys. **Drink water and other fluids (advised by your dietitian) to prevent dehydration.**
- When you arrive, check the local emergency number. Not all communities use 911.
- After your trip, have your blood work done.

Medication Advice:

- Remember to carry your medications with you. Do not pack them in your luggage as it could be delayed or lost.
- Take enough of all your medications with you including an extra supply in case you are away for longer than expected.
- If you are travelling over several time zones, check with your pharmacist about the appropriate dosing schedule.
- Call Macdonald's Prescriptions (604)874-9668 in advance so your medications can be prepared on time. You will only be allowed to have a three-month-supply.
- If you use Eprex or Aranesp, read all the information provided about travelling. It is important to keep your medication safe. **Contact your travel agent to get information about the rules regarding carrying and storing your syringes if you are travelling by plane, boat or train.**
- Keep a small container of phosphate binders:
 - In your purse
 - In your sports bag
 - In your car

Nutrition Advice

- If you are travelling phone well ahead of time to request help. Ask for your special needs such as low salt meals. Most airlines accept special dietary requests on 24-hours notice. If travelling by train make your requests a few days ahead.
- Often snacks may be salty or high in potassium so you may want to carry your own items. If you have diabetes, carry a source of sugar for treating low blood sugars.
- You may want to pack something to eat and drink (including bottled water) when travelling. This will help when nothing is available or food choices are unsuitable.
- When travelling abroad, be familiar with local foods. This will help you make the best choices. Talk to your dietitian.
- When you are eating out talk to your server to get more information about menu choices.
- If you have food allergies or restrictions carry a list of restricted foods in the local language of the country you are visiting. Ask your dietitian to help you with this.

For more copies, go online at <http://vch.eduhealth.ca>
or email phe@vch.ca and quote Catalogue No. **FP.450.P694**

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The information in this document is intended solely for the person
to whom it was given by the health care team.

www.vch.ca