

The Cystic Fibrosis traveller's guide to nutrition

This material will help you to prepare for travel so that your health is at its best during your trip. Thinking about your travel location and the weather at your destination will help you to be well prepared for your journey. Here are a few tips to help you enjoy your time away.

1. Get advice from your CF team: especially if it is your first time travelling overseas.

They will give you advice on what you need to consider. They may also be able to give information on CF centres near your travel destinations. It is also important to discuss your medication requirements and appropriate storage whilst travelling (i.e. CFTR modulator, insulin, enzymes).

2. Hydration is very important especially if you are taking a long flight, visiting a hot and humid place, taking part in outdoor activities, drinking alcohol, or if you get travellers' diarrhoea.

- Drink a minimum of 2 litres of fluid a day to prevent constipation and dehydration (e.g. water, juices, glucolyte, milkshakes, thickshakes and smoothies).
- Drink every hour and carry a water bottle or camel pack.
- Only drink safe water.

3. Salt is also important to avoid dehydration. Signs of dehydration include cramps, tiredness and loss of appetite. Increase your salt intake by taking salt tablets, sports drinks, Gastrolyte, salty snacks (e.g. nuts, pretzels, chips) and adding extra salt to food. Before you travel, your Dietitian can give you more advice on the amount of salt you will need.

4. Food Hygiene: There is a very high risk of dehydration and salt loss with travellers' diarrhoea.

- Consume only safe food and water (pay attention to advice given in travellers' guides).
- Avoid dirty premises and street vendors.
- Avoid raw or poorly cooked foods and peel all fruit.
- Ensure hot foods are served hot and cold foods served cold.
- Drink bottled or treated water even when brushing teeth.

If you get diarrhoea, maintain fluids and seek medical help.

5. Keep up the calories:

- Order special meals for your flight. Be aware of “no frills” airlines that are cheaper but may charge extra for food
- At your travel destination, follow recommendations on good value cafes/restaurants and make good use of the well-known fast food outlets.
- Buy extra foods/drinks at supermarkets and carry snacks with you when out and about.

6. Supplements: Whether or not you take your usual supplements may depend on excess luggage and customs. If unable to travel with your usual supplements you can use powdered versions (e.g. sachets of Scandishake) or make use of what is available by ordering:

- Thickshakes = 580kcal (2400kJ)
- Frappes = 360kcal (1500kJ)
- Smoothies = 270kcal (1100kJ)

You can also make your own high calorie milkshake or smoothie drinks by taking a “shaker” and using full cream UHT milk/milk powder, ice cream, yoghurt, and toppings from local stores.

7. Tips for pancreatic enzymes:

- Try to eat regularly and take enzymes to keep your bowels regular and to avoid bloating, fatty stools or constipation.
- Carry some in your hand luggage for use when on the plane.
- Read labels and match your enzymes to the total fat in “new” foods.
- Take enough enzymes for the whole trip or check to make sure you can buy the correct supply at your travel destination.
- Store in a cool dry place.

Speak to your Dietitian if you are unsure on how to match your enzymes to the fat in food.

For further information contact your Dietitian or Cystic Fibrosis Centre:
