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Travel guide for people with diabetes

There are a few things to consider when you are travelling. Besides the usual preparations, it is important to think about your diabetes when you are planning to be away. Before planning a trip, you need to be sure that you are healthy enough to go and that your diabetes is well controlled because travelling can affect your blood sugar control. Be sure to consult your doctor before you plan your trip.

What to do before you leave: Be sure to consult your doctor before you plan your trip. You should visit your doctor a few weeks before you leave to talk about adjusting your insulin or medication based on time zone change, scheduled activities and weather. Your doctor must sign an official letter in both French and English that contains the following information:

- Attestation to confirm that you are diabetic;
- A list of all the medication you take to treat your diabetes;
- A confirmation that you must carry with you: needles, diabetes medication, insulin, glucometer, many snacks;
- Your physician's contact details.

Keep this letter with your passport. It could help you avoid problems and searches at customs. In case of loss, be sure to keep a photocopy of this letter in a separate location in your luggage.

Bring your medication and supplies: We recommend that you bring twice the expected quantity of medication and supplies (pills, insulin, needles, lancets, test strips and quick absorption sugar). Keep your medication in its original package, with the pharmacist's label and your name clearly legible. In your hand luggage, carry a sufficient quantity of needles and lancets, as well as all your insulin and test strips, because checked luggage can be subject to extreme temperatures. Consequently, you will have everything on hand in the event that your checked luggage is lost. Carry a hermetically sealed container for storing all your used needles and lancets. Never throw them into a wastebasket or garbage can. If possible, give this container to a pharmacist, who can safely dispose of the contents. Do not forget to bring extra batteries for your glucometer.

During your trip: You will probably walk more during your trip than you normally do. Consequently, you may have to reduce your insulin dosage. That is why you should measure your blood glucose more often to ensure proper glycemic control. Remember: physical activity can affect your blood glucose for 12 to 16 hours afterward. No change to your insulin dosing is required under the following conditions:

- If the time difference is three hours or less (east / west);
- When your trip is north / south (with no change in time zone).

However, during long trips (east / west) when several time zones are crossed (and the difference is more than three hours), it is important to plan your meals and adjust your dosage and / or insulin schedule. Remember: it is better to maintain a slightly higher blood glucose level while travelling than to risk becoming hypoglycemic.

If you drive: Do not drive if your blood glucose is less than 5 mmol/L and do not get back behind the wheel for 45 to 60 minutes after your blood glucose level returns to normal. Then, have a snack every two hours. Eat a snack if your blood glucose is between 4.0 and 5.0 mmol/L before taking the wheel. You should stop every two hours to stretch your legs and every four hours to measure your blood glucose. At the slightest sign of hypoglycemia, stop and treat yourself as quickly as possible. To avoid such an event, keep non-perishable foods in the car.

A final tip: Watch carefully your blood glucose level. That way you will be sure to enjoy all the cultural and natural treasures you have travelled so far to see.

Have a nice trip!

Source: Diabète Québec

To receive the bimonthly Infoletter or to remove your name from the mailing list, please send an email to: infolettrediabete@hgh.ca



Important information

Cooking Class and Grocery Tour from 8:30 am to 12:00 pm on October 18 and November 15, 2019.

Registration is mandatory

with valid health card

613-632-1111 ext. 52701.

Apple Pie Oatmeal

(Makes 4 servings)

Ingredients:

1 1/2 cup 1% milk

2 cups water

1 1/3 large flakes oat

1/3 cup wheat germ

1 tablespoon maple syrup

1/2 teaspoon pumpkin pie spice or ground cinnamon

1 apple, cored and diced

1/2 cup sliced almonds

Method:

In a large saucepan, bring water and milk to a gentle boil over medium-high heat.

Stir in oats and wheat germ.

Reduce heat to medium-low heat; stir in maple syrup and pumpkin pie spice.

Cook, stirring for about 12 minutes or until almost

Remove from heat and stir in apple and almonds. Cover and let stand for 5 minutes before serving.

Nutritional value (per serving)

280 calories, 9.5 grams of fat, 41 grams of carbohydrates, 7 grams of fiber and 11 grams of protein

Recipe adapted by Sandy Corriveau, dietitian inspired by https://www.canada.ca/fr/sante-canada/services/guidealimentaire-canadien/conseils-alimentation-saine/ planification-repas-cuisine-choix-sante/recettes/gruau-tarteaux-pommes.html

