

Travelling with allergies

The thought of travelling with allergies can be a daunting and terrifying experience for some. There is a lot to think about before starting to plan your trip. Below are some tips to help you plan a successful trip. Visit www.allergyuk.org travel pages for more advice.

Flying

There is currently no legislation that shows the best practice for managing the needs of an allergic food traveller. Each airline has its own policy, so check when you book.

- Speak to airlines before booking to see how they support allergies and what provisions they have in place.
- Tell airline staff about allergies at every opportunity including booking, check-in, boarding.
- The 100ml liquid rule does not apply to medication in liquid form, for example, antihistamine syrup. You will need to carry the prescription letters from the doctor for medication and adrenaline auto injector devices.
- It is okay to ask the airline if they can make a passenger announcement explaining your child's allergies. You could also mention it to the people sat around you.
- Where possible, ask for an allergen free meal for long-haul flights, or take your own food on board.

Travelling with a baby

- Expressed breast milk, formula milk, juice, sterilised water and baby food are all exceptions to the 100ml liquid rule. This is only the case if you are travelling with the baby, and the items need to be available for staff to inspect.
- Share belongings between different bits of luggage, in case any luggage is delayed or lost.
- To reduce the risk of infection, make up feeds one at a time. If your baby doesn't finish a bottle, do not be tempted to put it away for later. Germs can spread quickly in left over milk, and can cause an upset tummy.

General tips

- Check you have valid travel insurance before you travel in case of an emergency.
- Tell your GP you are planning to go away and check the expiry date of medication well before your departure date. They can advise you what paperwork you may need, for example, prescription or authorisation letters.
- Think about staying in self-catered accommodation. It will give you more control over what your family eat.
- Buy some allergy translation cards. These are really useful, pocket-sized cards that have information about your child's allergies in 35 different languages. These can be bought from, www.allergyuk.org/get-help/translation-cards
- Think about where you are spending time on holiday. Make sure you know the nearest emergency departments and how to contact the emergency services.
- Remember that people's understanding of food allergies will differ. Some people will have very little understanding and may need more explanation.