

Living Well After Brain Cancer Treatment

Traveling



Under normal circumstances, travel can cause a lot of stress. Traveling can seem very daunting when you have a brain tumor. Before you embark on your travel, here are a few helpful tips that might help ensure that your trip goes smoothly.

Before You Go:

- **Remember to pack your medications.** To help you remember to pack your medications, try setting an alarm, leave your medications out in a visible spot while you or your loved one is packing, writing and checking off a list, or enlisting someone's help.
- **Take enough medications with you to last double the length of time** you will be away and **work with your provider regarding recommended vaccinations.** It is best to keep the medicine in its properly labeled bottle. In need of extra bottles? You can always ask your pharmacist for extra labeled bottles.
- **You may need to request an early medication refill** before your refill allowance. For most medications, insurance companies have "travel exceptions" or "emergency exceptions" which cover early refills. This often requires both your doctor and pharmacist to be involved. If you think you need an early refill, please speak to your prescribing provider.
- **Take a copy of your most recent neuro-oncology visit note.** This document is an up-to-date record that summarizes your treatment, medications, scan review, and plan of care. Also having a CD of your recent brain MRI is helpful just in case you need medical care while away.
- **Have detailed travel itinerary and boarding passes printed out** and kept together in an accessible folder. Review itinerary in advance with your travel partner. Build in extra time for transitions and rest.

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Ask your neuro-oncologist:

- Is it safe for me to travel?
- Will I need to adjust my medication schedule to a new time zone schedule? If so, should it be done gradually?
- Do I have scheduled tests / procedures that could be done before I leave or upon return?
- What about bloodwork?
- Could I get early refills of my medication, so I have double the supply I need with me?



- If you are traveling outside the United States, it is important to know that other countries have different medical systems and access to care. Travel medical insurance plans offer health and accident insurance when traveling internationally. Just for peace of mind, it might be worth to **research potential coverage options with your medical insurance plan** before you travel. Also, it may be important to consider investigating and identifying potential health care providers or medical facilities at your destination should you require medical treatment.
- If traveling by plane, carry a supply of medicine (enough to last the length of your trip) with you in your carry-on bag. Then **put your extra supply in another bag**. Then, if one of the bags get lost, you'll have a backup supply available.
- If you have seizures and plan to travel by airplane, carry a supply of a rescue medication, or a medication you can take on an 'as needed' basis if you have a seizure while on board.

While Traveling:

- Traveling with **Optune**? Optune's portable batteries contain lithium ion materials, which are **restricted from being checked as luggage on aircraft travel**. They can be carried in the passenger cabin. Also please note the Optune device **will activate metal detectors**. When powered down completely, Optune equipment is safe for X-ray security scanning. At security screening, inform staff that you are wearing a medical device that contains metal. You can contact Novocure Support any time of the day if you have any questions or concerns. Call 1-855-281-9301 (toll-free) or email support@novocure.com.
- Traveling to a different time zone? Depending on the time zone, **you may need to adjust the time at which you take your medications**, so that the medications are taken at the right time of day. This is often done gradually over a couple of days. Please communicate with your neuro-oncologist if you think you might need to change your medication schedule.
- Stay limber and prevent deep vein thrombosis on long flights or car trips by taking **regular stretching/walking breaks**, drinking plenty of fluids, avoiding alcohol and wearing compression stockings. Here is a short exercise routine you can do while seated:



- Should you need bloodwork while traveling, **you can find a laboratory by calling the Member Services number on the back of your medical insurance ID card** or you can search the internet. Some things to consider in choosing a lab: Will there be any language barriers? Is the facility accredited?
- **Pace yourself.** It is easy to get more fatigued in a new environment so build in plenty of extra time for travel, transitions, and rest. Keep to your usual schedule as much as possible.
- Keeping hands clean through **good hand hygiene** is one of the most important steps you can take to avoid and prevent getting sick when traveling.
- Remember to **get plenty of sleep and keep hydrated**. Lack of sleep and dehydration can trigger a seizure.
- But most importantly, safe travels and **enjoy your trip!**