
Monitoring INR

If you take blood thinners that require INR monitoring eg. Warfarin, it is recommended that you plan how you will manage this throughout your trip. There are two main methods that can be used:

- / Self-monitoring: You may be eligible for a funded self-monitoring INR machine via Heart Kids NZ. Otherwise they can be purchased through Roche Diagnostics coaguchek.co.nz
- / Another option is locating labs that carry out the testing for you. There are websites and apps that can be used for locating testing facilities in many countries. **Google PT/INR Testing to find them**

Support Organisations

- / Adult Congenital Heart Association provide a useful “Travel Dictionary” that contains contact details for congenital cardiologists all over the world. Find this resource on their website www.achaheart.org
- / Corience provides a checklist for those traveling with CHD and factors to consider if you are seeking employment when relocating. www.corience.org
- / Contact details for local support groups can be found on the following websites.
Groups throughout the world: www.achaheart.org
United Kingdom: chfed.org.uk
Australia: heartkids.org.au

For further information, contact:

- / Nurse Specialist – Adult Congenital Cardiac Service
Auckland District Health Board
Telephone: +64 (0)27 227 1400
Email: achdnurse@adhb.govt.nz
- / Your local General Practitioner

This publication was kindly funded by the ANZ Staff Foundation 082018ANZ



Travel & Your Heart



For further information:

www.heartkids.org.nz
www.facebook.com/heartkidsnz
0800 543 943
info@heartnz.org.nz

Supporting heart kids through life

Information for heart kids, teens and parents/whānau about travelling and moving overseas

Heart Kids is the only organisation in New Zealand dedicated to providing lifelong care and support for children, young people and families impacted by childhood heart defects (CHD).

How exciting that you are considering exploring the world. Travelling or relocating can be a very exciting time: learning about new cultures, foods, and customs. Travelling with a heart condition does need careful consideration and more planning. For this experience to be rewarding and safe here are some points you may want to consider.

Travel Discussion

It is important to talk to your cardiologist well before you make your travel arrangements or relocation plans. This will ensure you are well informed and know how to keep safe.



Discussions may include:

- ▮ Your destination of travel and the safety measures that may be needed to be put in place.
- ▮ Locating the nearest cardiologist or GP.
- ▮ Immunisations, to keep you protected from diseases and infections.
- ▮ Quantity and type of medication you will need for your entire trip.

Remember to keep in close contact with your cardiologist and/or the Adult Congenital Heart Disease (ACHD) team about your departure and return date, so they are able to follow up on your health when you return!

Travel & Health Insurance



When travelling or relocating, it is strongly recommended that you purchase travel or health insurance. Accessing health care overseas can be very expensive if you do not have insurance. As you have a pre-existing condition it is recommended that you contact an insurance broker. They may be able to recommend companies that are able to offer you suitable cover.

Health Records

Medic Alert Bracelets

Taking a Medic Alert Bracelet with you while you travel keeps all information about your heart condition in one place. It is recognised worldwide and health professionals can quickly access information about your health and needs. Alternatively, having your "In Case of Emergency" (ICE) information on the lock screen of your phone allows health professionals to easily access this information.



Health Documents

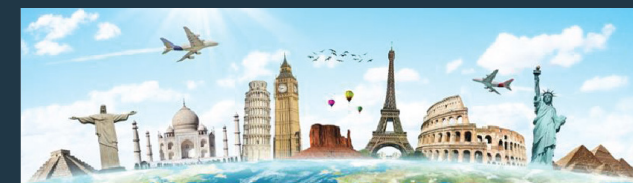
When going overseas with a heart condition, it is recommended that you take along an up to date medical record of your current condition, medications and contact details. (Failing that take a printed copy of your most recent cardiac clinic letter.)

Free resources that you can use are:

- ▮ **Health Passports:** This is a booklet that contains all your medical information in one booklet. This is easily available online on the Ministry of Health website www.health.govt.nz
- ▮ **Manage My Health:** This is a more compact and electronic version which you download for free in any app stores. It is also accessible online through their website www.managemyhealth.co.nz

Flying

- ▮ Some airline companies may want you to get medical clearance before flying so this is something to be aware of before booking flights.
- ▮ Consider taking compression stockings and information on in-flight exercise to prevent Deep Vein Thrombosis.
- ▮ Ensure that you keep yourself hydrated - particularly if you have Fontan circulation or are taking frusemide for heart failure management.
- ▮ If you are flying long-haul for more than 12 hours, work out in advance when you will take your medications so there is no break in your medication administration schedule. Ensure that you take time zone changes into consideration.



Medication



- ▮ There are strict custom policies regarding travelling with medications. Please check for the different countries you will visit.
- ▮ It is important that you have brought along your prescription from your doctor and it is declared in customs to avoid fines.
- ▮ Medication should be carried in their original containers and only bring up to 3 months supply of prescription medicines or 1 month of controlled drugs.
- ▮ Also, be aware of the generic/branding name of some medications. Some countries may have different names for your medication.
- ▮ If you have decided to relocate, remember to renew your prescription with your new GP or cardiologist so you have enough medications to keep you going!