

Travelling with a Stoma or Internal Pouch

A checklist to help you prepare for your trip.

Documents & Essentials

☐	Passport Check it is valid for the full length of your trip; plus any extra validity your destination requires.
☐	Visa, if required Check entry requirements for your destination well in advance.
☐	Travel insurance Ensure you declare your full medical and surgical history to the insurer, so your policy is valid.
☐	GHIC card Global Health Insurance Card, for healthcare cover in the EU.
☐	Medical history summary This information should be available on your NHS app.
☐	Prescription Carry a copy of your prescription for the medications you are travelling with. Different countries may have their own rules about which medications you can take with you.
☐	Travel certificate Available from the IA website; useful at the airport or if you need medical care, as it gives an overview of your needs translated into different languages.

Health & Medication

☐	First aid kit of medications you may require Medications you use only occasionally may not be easily available worldwide. Consider packing anti-diarrhoea medication, rehydration tablets or sachets, travel or nausea medication, allergy medication, and simple pain relief such as paracetamol.
☐	Vaccination requirements Check well in advance, as some travel vaccines aren't suitable for everyone and may need extra planning around timing.
☐	Time zone changes and medication If you take medication at set times, plan how you'll adjust the schedule across time zones, especially for anything critical.
☐	Sun protection around the stoma site It's always important to use SPF in the sun. Some medications you may be taking may mean it's advisable to use a higher protection than previously used.
☐	Emergency contact details Local emergency numbers for your destination, plus contact details for your stoma/pouch nurse or clinical team at home.

Stoma & Pouch Supplies

☐	Stoma/irrigation supplies (if used) Pre-cut your bags, as scissors are not usually allowed in hand luggage. Take double the quantity you would normally use and have a change kit handy on the plane. Remember to take filter stickers if you are swimming and consider flange extenders for long periods in the water. If travelling to a hot country, consider storing your stoma bags somewhere cool, as adhesive can be affected by extreme temperatures — some people use a small cool bag for this. It's handy to have your supply order form with you in case you need to obtain further supplies while abroad.
☐	Split supplies across different bags Divide your stoma supplies between hand luggage and hold luggage — if one bag goes missing, you won't be left without supplies.
☐	Spare clothing in hand luggage In case of a leak or change needed while travelling.
☐	Disposal bags Some countries have limited facilities for disposing of stoma waste, so it's worth carrying your own.
☐	Hand sanitiser and wipes Useful for changes when you don't have easy access to a bathroom.

Assistance & Accessibility

☐	RADAR key Available from Disability Rights UK or Amazon.
☐	Hidden disabilities lanyard The sunflower lanyard is recognised at a lot of airports. Some airports have their own scheme, so contact the airport in advance depending on where you are travelling.
☐	Airport assistance If you need assistance for any reason, or want to take extra baggage, contact the airport in advance to see what services they can offer to meet your needs.

Comfort & Support

☐	Hydration and snacks It's always good to have a small supply of your usual hydration choice and snacks, in case the airline food isn't suitable.
☐	Stoma/pouch nurse If you are unsure about travelling on airlines or abroad, speak to your nurse or clinical team for personalised advice, so you have a plan in advance that addresses your concerns.
☐	Peer support If you are new to travelling with your stoma or internal pouch, reach out to your usual peer support or the IA — people will have lots of hints and tips to enhance your travel experience.
☐	Embassy/consulate details For your destination, useful to have on hand in case of a medical emergency abroad.

☐	Language/phrase card A few key phrases or a translated note explaining your medical needs, if travelling somewhere your GHIC/travel certificate translation might not cover.
☐	Local peer support or ostomy association contacts Some countries have their own associations who can help if you run into difficulties at your destination.

Your Own Notes