

Travel

Travelling can have many benefits for people affected by cancer. It may help you relax, or allow you to spend more time with family and friends. Travel may also help you become more active. This can have health benefits before, during and after cancer treatment.

Many people who have cancer can travel without problems. But, for some people, cancer or treatment for cancer may make travelling more difficult. Here are some of the main issues to consider:

- Cancer and its treatment can have side effects. These may cause problems while travelling.
- You may need to take medicines and medical equipment with you.
- Travel insurance is generally more expensive for people who have cancer.
- You may need to get a fitness to fly certificate from your doctor.

Tips for managing travel and cancer

- Speak to your doctor, specialist nurse or a health professional before you make any plans. They can advise whether it is safe for you to travel and explain how to prepare.
- If you are still having cancer treatment, your healthcare team may be able to help you plan a safe trip. It may be possible to change your treatment dates or arrange a gap in your treatment.
- Ask a healthcare professional about having vaccinations at least 8 weeks before you travel. Vaccinations can protect you from certain infections found around the world. Some vaccinations may not be suitable for you and this may affect where you can go on holiday.
- Try to find suitable travel insurance. This will protect you if you need to cancel your trip or require emergency treatment abroad.
- Apply for a free European Health Insurance Card (EHIC). An EHIC entitles you to free, or less expensive, emergency treatment in some European countries. The UK has now left the European Union, but an EHIC is still valid until 31 December 2020. An EHIC is not an alternative to travel insurance and it is important to buy this wherever you travel.
- Tell your travel company and accommodation in advance about any needs you have.
- Get advice from your healthcare team about taking medicines or medical equipment abroad. Also check any country restrictions with the embassy or high commission. You may need to get a doctor's letter or apply for a personal medicines licence from the Home Office.
- Take enough medicine supplies to last for your whole trip and in case your return is delayed.
- Use sun cream with a high sun protection factor (SPF) of at least 30 and a 4 or 5-star UVA protection rating.
- It is important to reduce your risk of infection. Wash your hands regularly and be careful about what you eat and drink. Try to avoid insect bites, especially from mosquitos.
- If you become ill while staying in a hotel, ask the receptionist to call a doctor. If you need urgent help, contact the emergency services or visit the emergency department of the nearest hospital.

Local resources:

Resource	Contact details

National resources:

Resource	Contact details
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> British Insurance Brokers' Association Can help you find travel insurance brokers. Fit for Travel Gives information on avoiding illness and staying healthy when travelling. Foreign and Commonwealth Office The government department which supports British citizens abroad. National Travel Health Network and Centre Provides free travel health information for travellers and health professionals. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> www.biba.org.uk Tel 0370 950 1790 (Mon to Fri, 9am to 5pm) Email enquiries@biba.org.uk www.fitfortravel.nhs.uk www.fco.gov.uk Tel 0207 008 1500 Email fcocorrespondence@fco.gov.uk travelhealthpro.org.uk Patient enquiries 0203 447 5999 Email uclh.htdtravelclinic@nhs.net

Further information

macmillan.org.uk/information-and-support/organising/travel-and-holidays

community.macmillan.org.uk/cancer_experiences/travel_insurance

Our booklets and leaflets are available to order free on be.macmillan.org.uk

- **Travel and cancer**

More information and support

If you have more questions or would like to talk to someone, call the Macmillan Support Line free on **0808 808 00 00**, 7 days a week, 8am to 8pm, or visit **macmillan.org.uk**

Deaf or hard of hearing? Call using NGT (Text Relay) on **18001 0808 808 00 00**, or use the NGT Lite app. Speak another language? Telephone interpreters are available. Please tell us in English the language you would like to use.

We produce information in a range of formats and languages. To order these, visit **macmillan.org.uk/otherformats** or call our support line.