

tips & suggestions

for traveling with HD or HF

Heart Disease

Heart Failure



Consult Your Doctor Before You Travel

- **Get Clearance (HD/HF):** Speak with your healthcare provider well in advance of your trip to make sure you're stable enough to travel.
- **Discuss Your Medications (HD/HF):** Your medications may be adjusted or your doctor may be able to provide recommendations based on your condition. The discussion should include the timing if time zones are of concern.
- **Ask for Medical Advice (HD/HF):** If you're traveling abroad, ask for information about local healthcare systems, and know where the nearest hospital or medical facility is in case of an emergency.



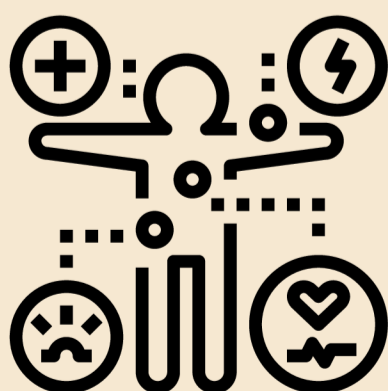
Know Your Medications

- **Bring Extra Medications (HD/HF):** Always pack more than you'll need in case of delays. Keep the medications in their original packaging with clear labels, as well as a list of the drugs and dosages.
- **Carry Prescriptions (HD/HF):** Make sure you have a note from your doctor explaining your heart failure diagnosis and a list of medications in case you need to get replacements abroad.
- **Consider a Pill Organizer (HD/HF):** For easy tracking, especially if you're on multiple medications.



Monitor Your Symptoms

- **Know Your Warning Signs (HD/HF):** Keep an eye out for any changes in your symptoms, such as increased shortness of breath, swelling in your legs or abdomen, or unexpected fatigue. If anything feels off, seek medical attention immediately.
- **Optional - Use a Blood Pressure Monitor (HF):** Keep track of your blood pressure and weight, especially if you're prone to fluid retention. If you notice a sudden increase in weight (more than 2-3 pounds in one day), this may indicate fluid buildup, and you should contact a healthcare provider.



Monitor Your Fluid Intake and Diet

- **Control Sodium Intake (HF):** Since heart failure often requires a low-sodium diet, research food options at your destination.
- **Watch Your Fluid Intake (HF):** Avoid drinking excessive fluids, especially if you're prone to fluid retention. Be mindful of your intake, especially if you're traveling to places where it's easy to forget about hydration (like hot climates).
- **Plan Meals (HD/HF):** Try to eat smaller meals more frequently to avoid overloading your heart, which can be a strain after big meals.
- **Bring healthy snacks (HD/HF):** Consider packing low-sodium nuts or dried fruits in case healthier options aren't available.
- **Limit Alcohol Intake (HD/HF):** Best option is to abstain... or limit to one drink per day.

Traveling by Air

- **Avoid Flying if You're Unwell (HD/HF):** Flying can place additional strain on the heart due to changes in air pressure and oxygen levels, so make sure you're stable before flying.
- **Bring a Travel Oxygen Device if Needed (HD/HF):** If your doctor has prescribed supplemental oxygen, contact the airline in advance to make arrangements. Many airlines provide this service, but you'll need a prescription and approval.
- **Stay Hydrated (HD/HF):** Airplane cabins are often dry, so drink plenty of water (but avoid overdoing it) to prevent dehydration, which can be a concern for heart failure patients.

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Take it Easy with Physical Activity

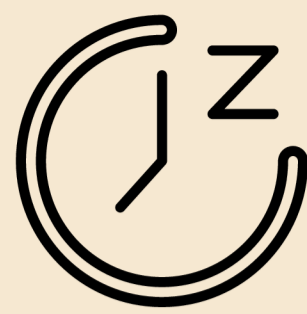
- **Avoid Strenuous Activities (HD/HF):** While it's fine to enjoy some sightseeing, avoid activities that could overexert you, like hiking, heavy lifting, or walking long distances in hot or humid conditions.
- **Use public Transportation (HD/HF):** Consider taking buses or trains instead of walking long distances. Many cities have transportation options that can help reduce physical exertion.

Consider Travel Insurance

- **Get Comprehensive Travel Insurance (HD/HF):** Make sure it covers any heart-related issues, including medical evacuations or treatments abroad. Review the terms carefully to ensure heart failure is covered.
- **Consider Inter-Provincial Coverage (HD/HF):** Many incidentals, medications and ambulance coverage vary from province to province.

Stay in Comfortable Accommodations

- **Choose Accommodations Wisely (HD/HF):** Opt for places that are easy to access, like those with elevators and minimal stairs. A comfortable and quiet environment will help reduce stress and fatigue.
- **Check for air conditioning (HD/HF):** If you're traveling to a hot climate, air conditioning can help keep your environment comfortable, as heart failure can make it harder for your body to regulate temperature.



Plan for Rest

- **Take Breaks Frequently (HD/HF):** When traveling, it's easy to push yourself too hard. Schedule rest periods throughout the day to avoid overexertion. If you're traveling by car, make stops every couple of hours to stretch your legs and take a breather.

Keep a Medical Emergency Plan

- **Know How to Reach Emergency Services (HD/HF):** Familiarize yourself with emergency numbers and medical resources at your destination. Include where the cardiac hospital is located. Having a plan in place can give you peace of mind.
- **Wear a Medical ID (HF):** Consider wearing a bracelet. Especially if you have an ICD or defibrillator.
- **Medical Journal (HD/HF):** Bring a copy of your latest test results, your diagnosis, medications, and emergency contacts. This could be a lifesaver in an emergency. Make sure someone you are travelling with knows where to find the information.
- **Phone (HD/HF):** If you prefer to use your phone for heart information, make sure it is updated and access is available to someone you trust and is with you.

Check the Weather

- **Check Before You Book (HD/HF):** Be aware of the average temperatures of your destination. Consider hot temperatures, wet temperatures and consider adjusting your plans based on your tolerances.

Airport Assistance

- **Preserve Your Energy (HD/HF):** If you tire quickly, considering using the airport services to get from gate to gate. In some cases it can be quite a trek to get to your gate. Preserve your energy for once you are at your destination.

Traveling with heart disease or heart failure is certainly possible with the right precautions and adjustments. The key is to listen to your body and plan ahead so that you can have an enjoyable trip without compromising your health. Do you have a specific trip planned, or are you just considering travel options?



These guidelines are compiled as general information and not illness specific. Always speak with your care team. Thank you!

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