

# Travel guide

Advice for people  
travelling with a stoma



SecuriCare<sup>®</sup>



## My travel check list

- Passport
- Visa (if required)
- Travel insurance
- Travel certificate
- Toilet Priority Card
- Radar key
- Additional supplies  
(twice usual amount)
- Pre-cut pouches
- Change kit for journey
- Wet wipes
- Disposal bags
- Medical Adhesive Remover
- Barrier film (if used)
- Scissors (in checked-in luggage)

## Guide contents

It's important to continue with a full and active life and feel confident to travel following your stoma surgery.

This guide will provide advice and answer questions you may have when planning a day out or holiday at home or abroad.

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## Travel kit

### A good guide is to pack twice your normal usage amount...

- Pouches (pre-cut to make it easier for you)
- Wipes (wet and dry)
- Disposal bags
- Your usual accessory items for managing your stoma care routine e.g. medical adhesive remover
- Filter covers – useful when swimming to protect the filter
- Radar (NKS) key

### Documents

The following documents will help you if you have any issues while away.

- Adequate Travel Insurance
- Global Health Insurance Card (GHIC), ensure it is in date
- Travel Certificate
- Toilet Priority Card
- A list of all your medicines, including their full generic name, dosage and frequency

### First aid kit

You may want to make a small first aid kit to take with you, containing medicines for colds, allergies, motion sickness, tummy upsets & diarrhoea etc. Not all brands will be available worldwide.

## Days out

Day trips both at home and abroad may need a little more preparation but with some planning you should feel confident to go out as you did before having a stoma. A small wash bag should be able to hold all the items you will need for the day. SecuriCare provides a specially designed wash bag which is ideal for changing your pouch when you're out and about. It has a hanging hook and suction cup so can be attached to the back of a door and opens up into a handy shelf, giving you additional space to put your supplies when changing.

Avoid storing your appliances in the boot of the car on a warm day. Hot weather can affect the adhesive on pouches; storing stoma supplies in a cool bag can help stop any effect heat may have on the pouches. If travelling to a hot climate, keep pouches in a cool, dry environment.

**There are a number of websites where you can locate the nearest toilet:**

[www.changing-places.org/find](http://www.changing-places.org/find)

[www.toiletmap.org.uk](http://www.toiletmap.org.uk)

Or you can download an app\* for your phone, such as:

- Toilet Finder
- Flush Toilet Finder

\*Correct at time of publishing\*



### Radar National Key Scheme

Many locations across the UK have public and accessible toilets. In the UK the Radar National Key Scheme (NKS) offers independent access to locked accessible toilets around the country. Toilets fitted with National Key Scheme (NKS) locks can be found in shopping centres, pubs, cafes, department stores, bus and train stations and many other locations all over the UK.

## Flying

Start planning for your holiday in plenty of time by contacting your SecuriCare Patient Service Advisor. They will be able to arrange your order and make sure the items arrive before you travel.

### Before you go

- Pack supplies in hand luggage if possible and pack at least twice your usual usage. If putting supplies in checked luggage, try to split across different checked cases so if your bags are lost or delayed, you'll still have supplies. Airlines may allow you to take a travel bag for medical supplies in addition to hand luggage so check with the airline before you travel.
- Liquids up to 100ml can be carried through security in one clear plastic bag, contents should not exceed 1 litre in total. Some products are available in a wipe format, products such as **LBF Sterile Barrier Film** and **Appeel® Medical Adhesive Remover** are, please speak to your patient services representative for information.

This can be different in some airports, check the airport's website prior to travel and check for specifics at the destination country.

- If you are taking prescription medication, it may be useful to take a letter from your doctor advising of its contents.
- Ensure you take pre-cut pouches with you on board as scissors are not permitted. SecuriCare can arrange to cut your pouches for you.
- If you can choose your seat it may be helpful to consider access to toilet facilities onboard.
- If you need it, you can request special assistance when you're booking your flights or holiday and airport staff will help you pass through security and get on and off the aircraft.

**Some people choose to wear a sunflower lanyard as a discreet way to identify you may need additional assistance. This can be obtained by speaking to your a SecuriCare Patient Services Representative.**

## At the airport

- It may help to have a clean pouch when going through security for your comfort and discretion.
- Your pouch will not set off an alarm but may be viewed if you are required to enter a body scanner.
- If you need to be searched, present the airport staff with your Travel Certificate (available on the SecuriCare Website) which explains your condition and is translated into 11 languages. You can request a private search if you prefer.



### On the aeroplane

- It may be helpful to use toilets at less busy times e.g., before in-flight meals, to allow you time to deal with your stoma.
- Don't skip meals, it's important to maintain a routine and skipping meals may impact your output.
- Some people can suffer from increased abdominal gas due to changes in cabin pressure. This may not affect everyone and even those without a stoma may be prone to this.
- If you use a closed pouch, ensure the filter is not covered so that gas can escape. A drainable or two-piece pouch can allow you to resolve ballooning by opening/releasing pouch.

Your Stoma Care Nurse or Patient services representative will be able to offer you information on these options.

## Whilst away

- Store appliances in a cool dry place.
- Do not store supplies in the boot of a car or in direct sunlight as this may affect the adhesive on pouches.
- Dispose of pouches as usual in disposal bags unless using an **Aura® Flushable** pouch which can be flushed down any toilet that accepts toilet paper (please note these pouches are suitable for colostomates only).
- Different places have different mineral content in their tap water and although may be deemed safe to drink, can cause tummy upsets. In some places you should avoid tap water entirely.
- Alcohol can cause dehydration, it's important to stay hydrated and drink lots of non-alcoholic drinks too.



## Upset tummy

A change in water, climate and food can upset anyone's tummy, whether they have a stoma or not. Some people have fluctuations in their stoma output. If you prepare in advance this can lessen any potential impact.

Talk to your Stoma Care Nurse about anti-diarrhoea medication and directions for use. If you have a colostomy, you can take some drainable pouches so you can empty your pouch easily in case of an upset tummy.

### To avoid getting an upset tummy, try the below tips:

- Drink plenty of fluid in hot climates.
- Avoid drinking tap water, only drink bottled water.
- Consider that ice-cubes, fruits and salad may have been made/washed with tap water.
- Be mindful of eating local food specialities which may contain different ingredients and spices you are not used to at home, may alter your stoma output.
- It may be preferable to use bottled water or boiled water, once cooled to clean your stoma if you have a colostomy and you irrigate.



## Travel insurance

It may seem overwhelming when first looking for travel insurance as there are many companies to choose from. Many mainstream insurance companies now offer reasonable rates for people with pre-existing conditions but you may find specialist medical insurers can help ask the right questions and provide advice.

It's best to shop around to get the best price and policy. You can obtain quotes from several insurance companies through online comparison websites. The inclusion of what is covered, and the terms and conditions can vary considerably.

When taking out insurance, ensure you declare your stoma and any other pre-existing conditions, even if they are unrelated. Failure to do this may invalidate the insurance.



## GHIC card

The UK Global Health Insurance Card (GHIC) gives you the right to access state-provided healthcare during a temporary stay in Europe at a reduced cost or sometimes for free.

If you have a UK European Health Insurance Card (EHIC) it will be valid until the expiry date on the card. Once it expires, you'll need to apply for a GHIC to replace it.

To find out more or to apply for a GHIC please visit:  
[www.gov.uk/global-health-insurance-card](http://www.gov.uk/global-health-insurance-card)

## Travel certificate

At SecuriCare, we provide a travel certificate which explains your condition in 11 languages. It's very useful when going through airport security and you don't speak the local language.



## General pharmacy advice

Ensure you place repeat prescription requests with your GP well in advance of your holiday to ensure the items arrive to you in time. Medicine should be kept in its original packaging, correctly labelled and stored in hand luggage.

If you run out of medicine or drugs for any reason whilst away in the UK, you can contact NHS 111 who will be able to help. A local pharmacy may also be able to supply a limited amount of your medicine on an emergency supply basis.

**Please note:** Some medicines that are prescribed and sold in the UK, such as Co-codamol may be illegal in other countries. There are restrictions for taking controlled drugs abroad, such as morphine, pethidine, fentanyl etc. If your medicine contains a controlled drug, you'll need a proof of ownership letter signed by your GP to prove you own the drugs. You may need to show this at the border or airport security.

### The letter must include:

- Your name
- What countries you're going to and when
- A list of your medicines, including how much you have and doses
- The signature of the person who prescribed your drugs

If you are travelling with 3 months supply or more, you'll need to apply for a personal license which is issued by the Home Office. You can find out more here [www.gov.uk/travelling-controlled-drugs](http://www.gov.uk/travelling-controlled-drugs)

Ensure you check the travel restrictions for the countries you are visiting and or travelling through by contacting the UK consulate or embassy. Further information is available on [www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice](http://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice)

You can also read more on [www.fitfortravel.nhs.uk](http://www.fitfortravel.nhs.uk)

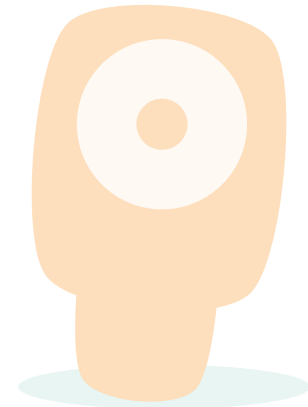
You can also find information on individual airline and airport websites.

## Getting medicines abroad

If you do need to buy medicines while away, check with the nearest pharmacy if they are able to help. Some prescription medicines can be sold over the counter in other countries. If not, they should be able to advise you where you can see a local doctor or the location of the hospital emergency department.

Ensure the pharmacist knows you have a stoma and inform them of any other medical conditions you have when purchasing medicine. It may help to make a note of the local language words for medical conditions you may need to inform them about.

Check your insurance policy to see whether you need to notify the insurance company before you consult a doctor or buy medicines. Always keep receipts for medicines and stoma supplies in case you need to provide these to the insurance company.



## Storing medicines

If your medicines need to be stored in a fridge during your holiday, contact your travel operator or hotel prior to departure to confirm there is a suitable secure fridge available for your use.

Your pharmacist will be able to advise you on methods for storing medicines requiring controlled temperature during the journey.



## Sun protection

It is important to use SPF when spending any time in the sun. Apply sunscreen after attaching your pouch. Suncream on the skin can make it more difficult for the flange to stick securely to the skin.

Medication or treatment may change the way your body reacts to sunlight, it may be advisable to use a higher sun protection factor cream, than you may have previously used before.



### Useful numbers

**SecuriCare Order Line**  
0800 318 965

**NHS 111**  
Non-emergency number  
Open 24/7, 365 days a year  
[www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)

**Radar National Key Scheme**  
0207 250 8181  
[www.disabilityrightsuk.org](http://www.disabilityrightsuk.org)

## Swimming

There are many options for swimwear which can cover a stoma pouch if desired. Often people are happy for the pouch to be visible. This is a personal preference as more people have an awareness of stomas due to increased media coverage. However, if you are looking for something specifically designed for ostomates, here is a company that offer specialist swimwear:

**Vanilla Blush** [www.vblush.com](http://www.vblush.com)

Some people find after prolonged periods of time in water and heat, that the pouch may need more frequent changes. You may wish to consider temporary use of a flange extender product as these are designed add extra security in water. Your Stoma Care Nurse or PS representative can provide more information.

You may want to use our sister company CliniMed's **UltraFrame Flange Extenders** which provide added security and longer wear time.

Filter covers are provided in your box of pouches so you can put one on to cover the filter whilst you are in the water to prevent water from entering the pouch filter. Remember to remove the filter cover afterwards to allow gas to escape from the pouch.

If you have a colostomy you may prefer to wear a stoma cap. These are very small closed pouches designed for temporary use and are more discreet. Speak to your Stoma Care Nurse or SecuriCare Patient Service Advisor for more information and to try a sample.





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SecuriCare Medical Ltd. is a company registered in England number: 01793254  
Registered office: Cavell House, Knaves Beech Way, Loudwater,  
High Wycombe, Bucks HP10 9QY.

Tel: 01628 850100 Fax: 01628 523579 Email: [info@securicaremedical.co.uk](mailto:info@securicaremedical.co.uk)

Web: [www.securicaremedical.co.uk](http://www.securicaremedical.co.uk) PID 11409

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