

Travel

Unless there are other reasons for not taking your child abroad, having a stoma should not affect your travel plans. However, it is important to check with your doctor that it is safe for your child to travel following recent surgery. Make sure you take your European Health Card (EHC), which you can apply for prior to your travel. This can be applied for via the post office or on-line. It will enable you to obtain free medical cover in all EEC countries. It is still advisable to take out separate insurance cover and always check that it covers pre-existing conditions such as the stoma. The patient associations have details of insurance companies who will provide cover for complex medical conditions.

You may also need a letter from your nurse or doctor regarding the equipment you would need to take with you. Various leaflets are readily available in different languages explaining your condition and that you are carrying specialist equipment.

Travel Kit

If you are travelling abroad by plane ask the airline about extra hand luggage for your travel kit – always take the kit with you on board, in case your luggage gets lost!

A large waterproof toilet bag is useful to hold your travel kit, and should contain:

- ▶ ready cut spare appliances
- ▶ accessories you normally use
- ▶ wet and dry wipes
- ▶ a small plastic bowl
- ▶ nappy sacks
- ▶ anything sharp must be placed in your suitcase and not in your hand luggage.



On the beach/in the pool

Swim wear can be a problem, but luckily most major stores now sell 'all in one' costumes for boys, as well as girls, which will cover the appliance (make sure the appliance is emptied prior to the child entering the pool). Costumes with patterns on may help to disguise the outline of the appliance.

Frequent dips in the water and hot weather could affect the adhesion of the appliance, making it necessary to be changed more often than normal, so make sure you take extra supplies with you. If you are going abroad, it would be advisable to check with your travel agent regarding specific swimming pool regulations. For example, some areas in France only allow a certain type of swim wear in their swimming pools.

It is important to remember that most public swimming pools do not allow babies in the pool with nappies on. So if your child has had a 'pull through' and is not toilet trained, you will need to obtain a special 'nappy' reusable swimming costume. A number of companies now make these.

It is important to remember that children may need an increased fluid intake in hot weather, particularly if they

have an ileostomy. Your Stoma Care Nurse or doctor will be able to advise you on what to do if your child develops sickness or diarrhoea, and how to ensure salts and water are replaced.

Local support

If you are going on holiday in any part of the UK, it may be possible for the Stoma Care Nurse to link in with the Stoma Care Nurse in the area where you are to be staying. This can be reassuring if you predict your child may have problems whilst you are away. In some instances, if you are going away for an extended length of time, it may be possible for arrangements to be made for your supplies to be delivered directly to your holiday accommodation.

