

OXYGEN DELIVERY SYSTEMS AND TRAVEL

Pulmonary Hypertension Conference

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Traveling with Pulmonary Hypertension and oxygen is possible, but takes **time, planning, and energy**. For many of us, travel is a priority or a necessity and we want to continue it so we do the research and planning to make it possible. Today, we hope to share some of our "Learnings" in having travelled with oxygen. Remember we all have different needs: 24/7 oxygen, just at night, high altitude; continuous, intermittent.

PLAN AHEAD

- Before buying any airline, cruise or tour tickets check with all companies involved to make sure the trip is possible.
- Work with Special Needs Department of company. They all have different forms/requirements. They also can be very helpful in your planning process. Non-stop flights, Round trip cruises/tours are the easiest especially if you are not using a Portable Oxygen Concentrator. When you make calls, note whom you talked to and write down contact information.
- You can take approved POCs on most airlines (all beginning in Spring 2009) or rent oxygen from the airlines. You can also rent POCs from some suppliers.
- Visualize your trip, make sure all the bases are covered or where there might be a problem. Then solve it or accept it.

DOUBLE CHECK

- Call airlines, cruise lines, tour company, motels, oxygen suppliers 48 hours before leaving for confirmation of plans.

TAKE WITH YOU

- Letter from PH doctor describing medical requirements
- Doctors names and phone numbers
- Contact information of PH doctor in area where you are travelling
- Insurance information and complete list of medications
- Phone numbers of special needs department, oxygen providers Cell phone numbers of anyone meeting you with oxygen
- Oxygen Prescription

Note: Last minute air travel is possible if you call airlines special needs department and work with them. If you have flown with airline within a year, your forms are on file.

SECURITY TIPS AT AIRPORT

- In many cases, using a wheelchair is helpful to your caregiver, insures you priority at check points and gives you an escort. Request at reservation time.
- Carry on luggage limits do not apply to medical supplies. Identify your supplies
- If doing air travel with approved POC, there are often outlets in the airports and on the planes, but they not guaranteed. Keep your POC charged as you can.
- Keep a sense of humor!

Cruise specific: You might want to consider going in the night before the cruise to make sure supplies are in place. Have speciality drugs delivered to your motel.

Note: Generally persons in the travel industry are helpful. Airline stewards often need help in knowing how to use oxygen equipment provided by the airlines.

Be prepared for glitches by remaining calm, doing cool thinking and problem solving.

HELPFUL WEB SITES:

www.phassociation.org/Learn/PH_Tips/travel.asp

www.homeoxygen.org/airtravel.html

www.tsa.gov/travelers//airtravel/specialneeds/before_you_go.shtm