

General tips about using a fridge:

- If hiring a fridge make sure it is a larder fridge, no freezer compartment and has a temperature control of some description.
- Make sure you order or request the right size for the number of bags you need to store.
- When planning to use an unfamiliar fridge in any accommodation consider taking a fridge thermometer. Consider a digital one which may be better in terms of accuracy.
- Always wipe out any fridge before putting PN into it.
- Frequently opening the door will affect the temperature so do this only when you get the PN out.



Finally:

- o Planning is key to ensuring your travel plans go well.
- o Don't leave things until the last minute in the hope that it will just all be okay.
- o If you are unhappy with the withdrawal of fridges for holidays in the UK, then provide feedback to the relevant body:



Health Ombudsman

Customer helpline 0345 015 4033
8:30am - 5:30pm Monday – Friday

www.ombudsman.org.uk

- o **Enjoy your travelling.**

Talking Points 4

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Talking Points 4

Travelling with Parenteral Nutrition within the United Kingdom



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Talking Points 4:

Travelling with parenteral nutrition within the United Kingdom

Basic fluid advice and the need for a fridge

When electing to travel it is your responsibility to ensure the safe transportation of your PN. Always find out exactly what your homecare company offer in terms of a travel service.

If your delivery is to a made to your UK holiday destination, then it will arrive packaged and you should know exactly how many hours it can remain in the packaging before the feed must be put in a fridge. You may arrive later than your feeds and therefore they may need to be unpacked or safely stored by someone else.

If packing it yourself make sure you follow all the guidance you have been given, if you don't know ask!

Parenteral Nutrition (PN) is usually delivered to you at home via a cold-chain process. Compounded feed must be kept between 2 – 8 °C to maintain the stability of the solution. Upon delivery the bags are placed in a dedicated fridge and the temperature must be maintained at all times. Some patients have a pharmacy grade fridge others have domestic fridges that conform to regulations.

Some people use 'off the shelf' (multi-chamber) bags when travelling which do not need to be kept in the cold-chain process. If you are unsure what they are then ask your nutrition team/healthcare professionals about them. They do not work for everyone but there's no harm in asking.

When travelling, no matter how near or far, the PN must be transported in appropriately approved packaging to retain the correct temperature of the PN. If the feed is to be used on the day of travel, within 24 hours, then follow the advice you have been given or your usual practice.

Under the new national home parenteral nutrition framework for England, fridges for UK based holidays can no longer be provided. They have never been provided for overseas travel. Your hospital or homecare company are not responsible for this decision; it was made by the Commissioners with overall responsibility for the framework.

So what can you do?

We can follow the experience of members who have travelled further afield, as well as regular UK travellers, which has contributed to the travel information PINNT has available:

- ✓ Consider the type of accommodation you book if it's a holiday; self-catering, apartment, villa, hotel, etc. Some obviously come with a fridge others will not.
- ✓ If booking a hotel, they may say there is a fridge; it's likely to be a minibar which is not suitable for storing PN.
- ✓ Some hotels may be able to offer fridge facilities out of your view or control. If you accept this make sure you know where it is, how it will be stored and how you gain access to it.
- ✓ If the holiday accommodation you pick does have a fridge but you would like a second one, ask at the point of booking. In some instances, they may be able to supply an extra one. This will depend on availability, cost and space within the accommodation.
- ✓ If you are staying with family or friends, ask if they have a spare fridge you can use.
- ✓ Consider hiring one for the duration of your holiday. Investigate a fridge hire company. They can be found via 'catering companies' but be prepared that it won't have been a dedicated PN fridge prior to you using it. During the hiring process you may be required to enter into a contract. Bear in mind this will be your responsibility and you will need to bear the cost and terms and conditions.
- ✓ If you do hire a fridge make sure you have full written confirmation and a contact number in case there are any problems during the delivery and collection process.
- ✓ If you arrange for a fridge to be delivered on your behalf prior to your arrival, make sure someone will be there to accept it. Also be fully aware as to how long it will take to get to the correct temperature before putting PN into it.
- ✓ If you have a pharmacy fridge at home, you do not need to use one when away but you must be able to control the temperature effectively.



- ✓ Investigate an electric cool box; used by many people when travelling by car. There are numerous brands on the market. A wide variety of internal capacities are available. They are not cheap but are robust for repeated use. Investigate their functionality fully before purchasing and look for those with a digital display panel.

Advice/support from your nutrition team/healthcare professionals:

- If you do not know about 'off-the-shelf' (multi-chamber) bags, ask.
- Find out if any are suitable for you to use during your travel plans? If you have tried them on a previous occasion it may be worth finding out if anything new is available and suitable for you.
- If you think a supporting letter may help justify a request for an extra fridge due to medical grounds consider asking for one.

