

# Talking Points 4



## Transportation and safe storage of your artificial nutrition



**Many people on artificial nutrition want to enjoy a trip or holiday but may be overwhelmed when it comes to transporting their artificial nutrition. All trips will require planning in advance: you should access all the information and support you can to help your planning. Any trip that involves managing your/their artificial nutrition in a place other than where it's usually done counts as travel! It may be going abroad, or it may be visiting family just down the road. Regardless of where you are thinking of going or how long you are intending to go away for, there are some key points you must consider.**

### **Consideration points:**

- When away from home it is your responsibility to ensure the safe transportation of your/their artificial nutrition and supplies.
- Talk to your usual healthcare professionals/nutrition team first to see if any changes to your/their current fluids or feeds are possible or necessary, e.g. non-refrigerated parenteral feeds, additional IV fluids in hot weather, oral hydration solutions, etc.
- Ask your homecare company for a copy of their travel or holiday information.
- If they do not have any written information, speak to your homecare customer services.
- When choosing your destination and accommodation type, consider not only enjoyment, but also practical aspects including how and where you will store the feeds/fluids and supplies.
- Make a list of the supplies you will need for the duration of your time away. Always take extras with you, especially items that will not be generally available or are personal to you. Be aware of the approximate weight and volume this will take.
- Read the PINNT booklets for further information. See the list at the end of the document.

### **Letters and supporting documents:**

- Ensure you have a letter from your nutrition team, usual healthcare professionals, your homecare company, and a copy of the prescription for the feeds and fluids.



- Ensure you know the rules and regulations of taking medical supplies through airport security and have the right information available. Airlines and tour operators cannot overrule the regulations of airport security.
- Travel insurance is essential if travelling outside the UK, however it should also be considered for any holidays within the UK. See Talking Points 2 for more information on travel insurance. If going abroad ensure you have a valid Global Health Insurance Card (GHIC).

**Types of artificial nutrition:** There are two types of artificial nutrition: enteral nutrition (tube feeding) and parenteral support (intravenous feeding). There will be differences in how the types of feeds and fluids must be transported and stored.

For both types of nutrition, work out and understand the quantity of feeds/fluids and supplies you will be taking away with you as soon as you plan a trip. This may impact on how you intend to transport it. Can you get it in the car, on the train, on the coach or plane to get to your destination? If you can arrange a delivery by your homecare company, ensure you know what they can do, where and when they can deliver (times and places), what they can deliver and how much notice they need. It may be necessary to review a scheduled delivery or arrange for what is called a split delivery. This means having part of it delivered to a destination in the UK for the time you are away, and the rest delivered to home, if there is a safe and approved process in place for this. If a delivery is not possible while you are away it will be necessary to arrange a new delivery date for when you are home.



## Enteral Nutrition

### Packing feeds and supplies:

- Ask your homecare company if they have any specific advice or have travel boxes you can use.
- If packing in your preferred boxes or cases, make sure they are securely locked or taped, that you can move them or will have help, and that they are clearly labelled, e.g. your name, destination, etc.
- All feeds must be packed safely to minimise damage and within the temperature range stated. If you are unsure how to pack safely, ask your homecare company for advice.
- Pack individual items/supplies in bags in your luggage to reduce the risk of things falling out or getting lost if your luggage is opened or checked before you reach your destination.

### Storing feeds and supplies:

- If you are staying in accommodation where other people have access to your space, keep all supplies safely stored in a box, bag or in a cupboard or drawers.
- Store them as you would at home, away from heat or direct sunlight and within the temperature range stated on the products.



# Parenteral Support

Parenteral Support (PS) is an umbrella term including parenteral nutrition and intravenous fluids. When planning a trip, it is important to know how your/their parenteral support must be transported and stored.

## Packing feeds and supplies:

- Ask your homecare company for a copy of their travel or holiday information.
- If your PS must be stored in a fridge between 2–8 degrees, this must be maintained during transportation.
- Ask your homecare company about the cold chain boxes they have that you can request for use. Ensure you know how long the boxes are validated for; this means how long they maintain the temperature range before you need to get the PS into a fridge.
- Follow all the guidance on packing the cold chain boxes. If you are unclear about this, ask your homecare company.
- You may wish to investigate an electric cool box or portable compressor fridge for transporting and storing compounded/refrigerated PS. Ensure you do your homework to make sure you understand how it works, how many feed bags it will hold and how to charge and power it. These products are not suitable for air travel.
- For IV fluids and feeds (multi-chamber bags) that do not require refrigeration/ cold chain you may wish to use the boxes they are delivered in or transfer them into boxes, bags or suitcases that you wish to use.
- All IV fluids and feeds must be packed safely to minimise damage and kept within the temperature range stated.
- Pack individual items/supplies in bags in your luggage to reduce the risk of things falling out or getting lost if your luggage is opened or checked before you reach your destination.





## Storing feeds and supplies:

- If you need a fridge to store PS, ensure one will be available at your destination when you make your booking.
- If you have a pharmacy fridge at home for the PS, you will not have access to this when away. You can use a standard fridge for your time away. If in doubt check with your usual healthcare professionals or nutrition team.
- Ensure the fridge is always switched on. If necessary, put a note on the plug or switch!
- If you are staying in accommodation where other people have access to your space, keep all supplies safely stored in a box, bag or in a cupboard or drawers.
- Store them as you would at home, away from heat or direct sunlight and within the temperature range stated on the products.

In England there is a framework that funds the provision of homecare for PS. The travel service funded under the framework covers:

- Delivery of IV fluids/feeds and supplies to a UK mainland destination, including a departure port or airport. Check the days and times this is possible.
- Packaging to ensure that the cold chain is maintained where required.
- Nursing *if* there is nursing available at the holiday destination (UK only). Do not make any assumptions and be clear on what is possible and how this may be provided or be subject to change.
- Letters explaining feeds/fluids and equipment.

The service *does not* cover:

- Compounding of feeds or transportation of feeds and supplies/ancillaries abroad.
- Delivery and collection of a fridge to a holiday destination.

# EU Regulations

- If you are travelling to the EU, be aware that current EU legislation restricts medical foods to 2kg.
- Always declare if medical feeds are being carried at EU borders; checks at borders are not consistent but you must expect them and be informed.
- Ask your healthcare professionals to provide a letter purely dedicated to this topic:
  - Outline it is 'essential medical nutrition'.
  - It has been prepared, packed, and sealed commercially.
  - Take a copy of the prescription to support the volume of feed, where it is made and who supplied it.
- Work is ongoing with PINNT as an active stakeholder to resolve this issue and ensure patients can travel unrestricted to the EU with medical feeds.

## Finally:

- ✓ Planning is key to ensuring your travel plans go well.
- ✓ Do not leave things until the last minute in the hope that it will just all be okay.
- ✓ Ensure you are informed about what is possible and where you can access information and support.
- ✓ If your travel plans do not require any support from your homecare company and you are thinking of going on a short trip in the UK, you may be able to just get up and go once you know how to organise yourself, your feeds and supplies.

**Living with artificial nutrition should not prevent you from taking trips and travelling. You may need to adjust and adapt your plans to accommodate your feeds and supplies, but never say never!**

**Whether it's down the road or across the world, knowing how to transport your artificial nutrition safely will allow you to take the next step in your journey.**

# Further information

- **Talking Points 1:** Considering a trip away from home with artificial nutrition
- **Talking Points 2:** Travel Insurance
- **Talking Points 2, part 2:** Travel Insurance companies
- **PINNT Travel and Holiday Guidelines**
- **Holiday Checklist** (coming soon)
- **The Home Parenteral Support Services in England Patients Charter**  
(Version 3)



## Contact PINNT

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