

Tips Before You Go:

- Check with your GP or pharmacist well in advance of your holiday to find out whether you need any vaccinations for the country you are visiting.
- For the latest information about the country you're visiting, including safety and visa requirements, check the Department of Foreign Affairs website <http://foreignaffairs.gov.ie/home/index.aspx.ie>
- Make sure your passport is still valid - some countries will require your passport to remain valid for a minimum period (in some cases up to six months).
- Plan your route to the airport, ferry etc. If you're driving, check for any roadworks or, if travelling by public transport, check for engineering works.
- Research about the area you're going to and plan what you want to see and do - try and find places of interest or recommended restaurants.
- Make sure you have the new European Health Insurance Card if you are travelling to a European Union member country - it will ensure that you have easy access to healthcare in that country. Visit their website for further information:
- http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/healthcard/coinexpert_en.htm
- Please note, it's still advisable to buy travel insurance because, for example, it doesn't cover emergency repatriation and not all countries give the same level of cover.
- Take a copy of your prescription in case you need to replace any medications whilst away.

Tips for your journey:

- Don't be ashamed to accept all the help that is available. If a wheelchair is a means to an end – use it
- Many people with MS find that heat does not help their symptoms. During the summer months try to plan activities so that you won't be outside at the hottest time of the day – over lunchtime. Putting your feet in a bowl of cold water, cold-water sprays and table top fans will help to cool you down
- Make the most of the activities and hobbies that you enjoy. Make MS fit into your lifestyle, rather than fitting your lifestyle around MS
- When you are going somewhere you haven't been before, find out where the toilets are, if there are lifts and how wide the doors are

- If you are travelling by airplane, get in touch with the airline directly before you leave, as they will be able to offer you assistance in getting around, both before and after the flight. They may also be able to put you in a seat with extra legroom if you need it
- If you are going to a restaurant or a concert, it is always worth phoning in advance, as they may be able to offer you priority parking or special seating arrangements
- If you are on disability allowance you can apply for a free travel pass and a free companion pass allowing both yourself and a companion to travel on public transport free
- You can apply for a disabled parking sticker allowing you to park your vehicle in a designated parking zone
- If you use sticks or a wheelchair, take advantage of queue jumping and get to the top at museums and theme parks etc
- Make sure you have all your documents with you including your passport and tickets.
- Pack your travel insurance policy booklet, schedule and information cards.
- Prepare a first aid kit to take with you - include diarrhoea and re-hydration sachets.
- Don't take large quantities of cash with you. Take travellers cheques and/or credit cards (make sure you have your emergency numbers with you to cancel the cards if necessary).
- Conceal any valuable jewellery - don't be an easy target for thieves or muggers.

Tips while you're away:

- Leave details of your holiday, including photocopies of your passport and flight tickets, contact numbers and travel insurance details, with a friend or family member.
- Leave spare keys with someone you trust.
- Use a timer so lights come on at night.
- Cancel milk and paper deliveries.
- Clear your fridge and kitchen of anything that might go off.

- Put out the bins.
- Ask someone to water plants and care for your pets.
- Ensure all house and shed windows and doors are locked.
- Unplug electrical appliances (except fridges and freezers).
- Check your home insurance is in order
- Leave the heating and hot water on a low setting if you are going away during winter months.
- At your hotel, keep valuables and cash in a safe deposit box or in the hotel safe if available. Some hotels will allow you to book a safe deposit box in advance or will have them installed in bedrooms.
- Check whether the tap water is safe to drink - to be sure drink bottled water and avoid ice in drinks.
- Remember to inform the local police in the event of any loss or theft.

If you require emergency medical treatment abroad:

- This checklist will help you if you need to arrange emergency medical treatment abroad. You should talk to your doctor and travel agent, if you have one, for advice before you go. You can also get information from the tourist office, embassy or high commission of the country you're visiting about getting medical treatment while you're there.
- Make sure you've got all the documents you need: your passport, your European Health Insurance Card (EHIC) if you have one, proof of UK residence (e.g. your driving licence or NHS card), and vaccination certificates.
- Check your insurance policy, so you know what your insurers will pay for.
- Contact your travel company representative if you have one.
- Give the doctor the generic name - not just the brand name - of any medication you're taking.
- Tell the doctor if you've been to any other countries on this trip.
- Keep the names and addresses of a few friends and relatives with your passport so they can be contacted if necessary.