



American Diabetes Association
1701 North Beauregard Street
Alexandria, VA 22311
1-800-DIABETES (800-342-2383)

What Special Concerns May Arise?

Can I speak to anyone at TSA before I travel?

Yes. TSA recently launched [TSA Cares](#), a new helpline number designed to assist travelers with disabilities and medical conditions. Travelers may call TSA Cares toll free at 1-855-787-2227 72 hours prior to traveling with questions about screening policies, procedures and what to expect at the security checkpoint. TSA Cares serves as an additional, dedicated resource specifically for passengers with disabilities, medical conditions or other circumstances or their loved ones who want to prepare for the screening process prior to flying. The hours of operation for the TSA Cares helpline are Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 11 p.m. ET, and weekends and holidays 9 a.m. to 11 p.m. ET. Travelers who are deaf or hard of hearing can use a relay service to contact TSA Cares or can email TSA-ContactCenter@dhs.gov.

Can anybody help me at the airport?

More than 2,600 Transportation Security Officers (TSOs), Lead TSOs, and Supervisors now have a dual role as Passenger Support Specialists (PSS). In addition to their regular checkpoint duties, these individuals support passengers who may be in need of assistance. A traveler who needs assistance or is concerned about his or her screening can ask a checkpoint officer or supervisor for a PSS at the respective checkpoint. Or, if TSA personnel recognize someone is having difficulty, a PSS could be called to ask whether assistance is needed. They receive enhanced training directly from experts in the field of a variety of disabilities and from individuals with disabilities themselves. This training includes additional instruction on civil rights for individuals with disabilities and medical conditions, and strategies for providing assistance with dignity and respect.

TSA tries to have a Passenger Support Specialist available during all screening checkpoint operating hours. If a traveler believes he or she may need to request the assistance of a PSS, he or she is encouraged to arrive at the airport early and immediately ask an officer or a supervisor for a PSS.

Is there a discreet way I can let TSA know about my diabetes?

Yes. TSA has created an [optional Disability Notification Card](#) that you can hand to Transportation

Security Officers (TSOs) to inform them in a discreet manner that you have a disability, medical condition, or medical device that may affect security screening. It does not exempt you from screening, but can facilitate communication with TSOs.

How do the full-body scanners and pat-downs impact me?

Currently, both traditional metal detectors and Advanced Imaging Technology (AIT) scanners are in use at most airports and you may be directed to either one by an officer. If AIT is available, you can request to use it instead of a metal detector. If you choose a full pat-down or if you are subjected to additional screening because you alarm a metal detector, you have a right to have this screening done in private and with a witness of your choice. For more information on these screening procedures, see www.tsa.gov/travel/security-screening/. Generally, you will receive a pat-down only on or near the area in which an irregularity was seen. For example, if you wear a pump on your right side, only that area should be examined.

Are there additional screening procedures for individuals who use pumps and continuous blood glucose monitors?

TSA's policy on insulin pumps is (<http://blog.tsa.gov/2014/02/tsa-travel-tips-tuesday-blog-post.html>) :

If a passenger uses an insulin pump, he or she can be screened without disconnecting from the pump. However, it is important for the passenger to inform the officer conducting the screening about the pump before the screening process begins.

Passengers who have insulin pumps can be screened using imaging technology, metal detector, or a thorough patdown. A passenger can request to be screened by patdown in lieu of imaging technology.

Regardless of whether the passenger is screened using imaging technology or metal detector, the passenger's insulin pump is subject to additional screening. Under most circumstances, this will include the passenger conducting a self patdown of the insulin pump followed by an explosive trace detection sampling of the hands.

If you have questions about the safety of wearing your devices through scanners, you should contact the manufacturer. Some manufacturers recommend that you not go through AIT scanners with your devices, while others have no such contraindications. Travelers who use insulin pumps and/or continuous blood glucose monitors have the rights to decide whether to be screened by AIT scanners or to request a patdown. Because recommendations for devices are different, TSA does not have a blanket policy for screening all insulin pumps in the same way. TSOs should never tell you to take off your devices, tell you that you need to keep them on and go through AIT

scanners, or tell you that you can't go through the AIT scanners—it is your choice.

The Association sometimes receives reports from travelers who are subject to overly intrusive screening because they use insulin pumps and CGMs. If you believe that you have been treated unfairly on account of your diabetes, please contact 1-800-DIABETES (800-342-2383) and ask how you can speak with a legal advocate.

Do my diabetes supplies need to go through the X-ray baggage scanner?

No, TSA states that "if the passenger does not want a liquid, gel, or aerosol X-rayed or opened for additional screening, he or she should inform the officer before screening begins. Additional screening of the passenger and his or her property may be required, which may include a patdown."

Can I request a visual inspection of my diabetes supplies?

Yes. You have the option of requesting a visual inspection of your insulin and other diabetes supplies rather than putting them through the X-ray. This inspection may include swabbing for explosives. Keep in mind that you must request a visual inspection before the screening process begins otherwise your supplies will undergo X-ray inspection. You should separate your supplies from your other property in a pouch or bag.

To prevent contamination or damage to medication and associated supplies and/or fragile medical materials, you should be asked at the security checkpoint to display, handle, and repack your own supplies during the visual inspection process. Any medication and/or associated supplies that cannot be cleared visually must be submitted for X-ray screening. If you refuse, you might not be permitted to carry your medications and related supplies into the sterile area.

What should I do if I experience hypoglycemia during screening?

You should immediately inform screeners if you are experiencing low blood sugar and are in need of medical assistance.

Last Reviewed: August 1, 2013

Last Edited: January 13, 2016



Articles from *Diabetes Forecast*® magazine: (<http://www.diabetesforecast.org>)

(<http://www.diabetes.org/in-my-community/become-a-member/?loc=articles>)
 More States Pass Safe at School Laws (<http://www.diabetesforecast.org/2016/jul-aug/safe-at-school-plans.html?loc=morefrom>)

Back-to-School Checklist (<http://www.diabetesforecast.org/2016/jul-aug/back-to-school-checklist.html?loc=morefrom>)

Day at a Glance: Diabetes Camp (<http://www.diabetesforecast.org/2016/may-jun/a-day-in-the-life-of-diabetes.html?loc=morefrom>)

Care at Camp (<http://www.diabetesforecast.org/2016/may-jun/care-at-camp.html?loc=morefrom>)

From Camper to Camp Doc (<http://www.diabetesforecast.org/2016/may-jun/camper-for-life.html?loc=morefrom>)



Copyright 1995-2016. American Diabetes Association. All rights reserved. Use of this website constitutes acceptance of our [Terms of Use](#) and [Privacy Policy](#)



nonprofit software