

Patient information

Haemoglobinopathy Disorders - Travel Advice For Adult Patients With Sickle Cell Disease

Haematology Liverpool

Travel advice

Travelling with sickle cell disease is not usually a problem but it is important to plan your trip carefully

Vaccinations and medicines

Different parts of the world have different infection risks. If you are travelling abroad, you should speak to your family doctor (GP) or a registered travel clinic to ensure that you get the most appropriate vaccinations for your area of travel.

Please ensure that you plan ahead and allow enough time for you to have all the medicines you need before travelling.

Contrary to some people's beliefs, having SCD **does not** protect you from malaria. It is therefore important to take anti-malarial tablets, use insect repellents, wear protective clothing and use mosquito nets.

Any insect bites should be kept clean and any signs of infection should be treated immediately, as wounds (especially on the legs) can quickly develop into ulcers which can be difficult to treat.

Flying

Flying sometimes causes some people to have sickle cell crises because of changes in oxygen pressure levels when flying at high altitudes. It is important to keep warm, drink extra fluids, move around the plane during the flight and avoid drinking alcohol. If you are well and are in a pressurised cabin, you will not need extra oxygen unless:

- you have been diagnosed with chest problems and are already on home oxygen.
- your doctor has recommended the use of oxygen.

If you do need extra oxygen, you should contact the airline you are travelling with to arrange this. Some airlines may charge for this service. If you fall sick and are not able to fly or travel, please contact your airline as soon as possible.

Some patients with sickle cell disease may be at higher risk of developing blood clots during long-haul flights. You should speak to your haemoglobinopathy team prior to taking long flights for advice regarding prevention of clots. This may include wearing flight stockings or taking anticoagulant medication.

Health insurance

Before travelling it is essential that you consider taking out travel insurance. If you are travelling to Europe (EEC member states), you can also apply online for a **European Health Insurance Card (EHIC)**. The EHIC is not an alternative to travel insurance but will cover the cost of treatment for pre-existing medical conditions, such as SCD. If you are travelling to a non-EEC country, it is important that you take out health insurance with a company that covers patients with long-term conditions.

You must declare your SCD or your insurance may be invalid and you will be liable for the cost of your medical treatment.

Planning to travel

You should discuss your plans with a member of the sickle cell team before you travel as they will be able to offer you important information on how to travel safely.

We sometimes recommend that you take a medical letter or your care plan with you on your trip, as this can help explain your sickle cell disease, how it can be managed and who to contact if you become unwell.

Always remember to take a supply of your regular medicines with you, including painkillers in case you develop a crisis. If you are taking strong opioids, such as morphine or oxycodone for pain relief, it may be advisable that you have a letter from your doctor explaining why it is important that you travel with these medicines.

Whilst abroad it is important that you keep hydrated; if you are not sure about the cleanliness of the water then drink bottled water, particularly if you develop diarrhoea and/or vomiting.

If you have any questions relating to any of the information contained in this leaflet please don't hesitate to speak to one of your medical/nursing team.

Specialist Haemoglobinopathy Team:

Consultant Haematologist

Lead Clinical Nurse Specialist

Two Clinical Nurse Specialists

Haematology Specialist Registrar (Rotational Position)

Clinical Psychologist

Feedback

Your feedback is important to us and helps us influence care in the future.

Following your discharge from hospital or attendance at your Outpatient appointment you will receive a text asking if you would recommend our service to others. Please take the time to text back, you will not be charged for the text and can opt out at any point. Your co-operation is greatly appreciated.

Further Information

Contact Details:

Clinical Nurse Specialist

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در صورت تمایل میتوانید کلیه اطلاعات تصویب شده توسط اتحادیه در رابطه با بیماران را به اشکال مختلف در دسترس داشته باشید، از جمله به زبانهای دیگر، به زبان ساده، چاپ درشت، صوت، خط مخصوص کوران، مون و بصورت روی خطی موجود است.

زانیاری پتوهندیدار بهو نهخوشانهی له لایهن تراستهوه پهسهند کراون، نهگمر داوا بکریت له فورماتهکانی تردا بریتی له زمانهکانی تر، نیزی رید (هاسان خویندنهوه)، چاپی گهوره، شریتی دهنگ، هیلی موون و نهلیکنرونیکی همیه.

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