



TRAVEL HINTS FOR IPF PATIENTS

- Planning ahead is crucial when considering travel. Prior to any form of travel, you should identify oxygen tank refill sites, which can be found in over 2500 locations in 1600 cities. Online vacation planning resources can help you arrange access to portable oxygen tanks, as well as assistance with other disabilities. Patients should also make sure to contact their oxygen provider for assistance so the oxygen is in place at their destination.

Make sure to give yourself sufficient lead time.

Useful Information Regarding Travel Aids

The following Web sites provide useful information regarding travel arrangements

- Breathin' Easy**
<http://www.breathineasy.com>
- National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute**
<http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/public/sept03/corner.htm>
- National Patient Air Transport Helpline**
<http://www.patienttravel.org>
- American Lung Association**
<http://www.lungusa.org>
- American Thoracic Society**
<http://www.thoracic.org/patiented/adobe/oxytherapy.pdf>

- Before traveling, have your physician provide written approval for travel. Contact your travel agent or cruise line to obtain any forms that may need to be signed or completed by your physician prior to your appointment with your physician. Make sure to plan ahead and see your physician several weeks prior to your departure in case your travel agent or cruise line needs any additional information. When traveling, take along necessary medications, physicians' phone numbers, medical treatment history, and a recent chest X-ray in your carry-on luggage.



Cruise ships that accept travelers who need supplemental oxygen require approval 4 to 6

weeks prior to travel. You will need to make your own arrangements for oxygen equipment delivery.



If traveling by air, make arrangements with the airline at least one month prior to travel.

Airlines provide their own oxygen tanks to passengers who need them. Familiarize yourself with available equipment, required documents, specific airport procedures, and additional charges (ranging from \$50 to \$100 per leg of the trip) that may apply. You may be required to purchase an additional seat to transport the oxygen tank. Be aware that insurance policies may not cover the cost of supplemental oxygen while traveling. Oxygen tanks may be available only on the airplane and not in the airport. Therefore, arrange non-stop flights whenever possible. To ensure your in-flight comfort, request an aisle seat near the restroom and avoid caffeine. Once you arrive at your destination, you will need to plan for obtaining oxygen since the airlines are not likely to handle your oxygen requirements once you are off the plane. Arrive at the airport early and arrange to have someone meet you at your destination.

- Ask your physician for a separate prescription for oxygen for your trip.
- A comparison of airlines' policies and fees for travelers with pulmonary disabilities is available at: http://www.breathineasy.com/tips_compare.html
- As with other methods of transportation, you should make prior arrangements for supplemental oxygen when traveling by car, train, or bus, and should discuss plans with your physician. In addition to the suggestions described above, consider possible changes in altitude that may affect your oxygen requirements during travel. Specific policies and restrictions of the rail or bus line should also be considered. When traveling by car, take care to safely store oxygen canisters.
- If you have any questions regarding travel, be sure to discuss them with your health care provider.