



Aviation Security Service  
*Kaiwhakamaru Rererangi*



diabetes  
new zealand

# Navigating airport security screening



Guidance for people living with diabetes

# Guidance for people living with diabetes

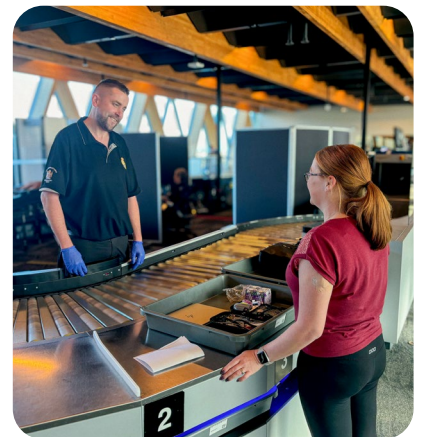
This guidance has been developed by the New Zealand Aviation Security Service in collaboration with Diabetes New Zealand. This advice applies to security screening at New Zealand airports.

If you're travelling internationally, please be aware that advice may vary for other countries due to different procedures and equipment in use. Please contact your airline or the relevant screening authority in each country where you'll pass through security screening.

## Preparing for travel

### Advice from Diabetes New Zealand:

- **Know your device:** check your device's user manual for specific travel instructions. Different brands may have different procedures.
- **Doctor's note and ID:** carry a doctor's letter stating that you have diabetes and the devices you depend on. A medical ID bracelet is also helpful to wear, if you have one.
- **Pack spares:** bring extra sensors, transmitters, and batteries to handle unexpected situations.
- **Inform your airline:** some airlines require notification for in-flight medical needs. Check their guidelines well in advance.



## Diabetes NZ general guidance for safe travel

- Always carry essential supplies and insulin on you, carry twice the quantity you would usually take.
- Have several copies of a medical letter stating you have diabetes and are carrying syringes or pen needles or pumps or a CGM in your luggage, to give to customs agents. Don't give away the original of this letter.
- Don't store insulin in the baggage compartment ('the hold') of planes because it will freeze.
- Get specialist help before you leave on adjusting insulin doses and food through time zones.
- If you use an insulin pump, follow the manufacturer's guidelines for flying.
- If you use a CGM, follow the manufacturer's guidelines for flying.
- Don't expose your insulin to extremes of temperature. If necessary, carry it in an insulated bag or small wide mouthed thermos flask.
- Always obtain medical insurance when travelling.
- Check the strength of any insulin you get overseas (some countries market different strength insulin).
- Check your blood glucose frequently while travelling.
- Carry a hypo management kit including follow up carbohydrate and keep it in the seat compartment so it can be reached when you are not allowed to get up.

[Click here for Diabetes New Zealand: Managing Diabetes and Travelling](#)

## Are there any restrictions on bringing medication through security?

For domestic flights, there are no restrictions on bringing medication.

However, for international flights, there are restrictions on powders and liquids. Pills or tablets must not exceed 350 millilitres (350 grams), and liquid medication must be in containers that are no larger than 100 millilitres. The total volume of liquids must not exceed one (1) litre. If you have more medication than these limits allow, it won't be removed if there's evidence that the medicine is prescribed by a medical practitioner for the person travelling. This evidence would be in your doctor's letter.

To ensure smooth passage through security, make sure your medication is in its original container with the prescription information. Additionally, have a letter from your medical practitioner detailing what you're taking, the required quantity, and that the medication may need to be used during the flight. This letter is necessary to confirm that any medicine in excess of these limits is eligible for the exception.

## At the airport - what to do at security screening

Put your cell phone and other loose items in your bag. Fold your jacket, coat and other loose items of clothing into a tray and place your carry-on bag on top. Footwear above the ankle must also go into a tray.

You will then walk through the screening point guided by an Aviation Security Officer. This [short video](#) shows the standard procedure for your international or domestic flight.

When you approach the screening point, please inform an Aviation Security Officer at the earliest opportunity if you have a wireless medical device, such as an insulin pump or continuous glucose monitor. They can arrange an alternative screening procedure for you.

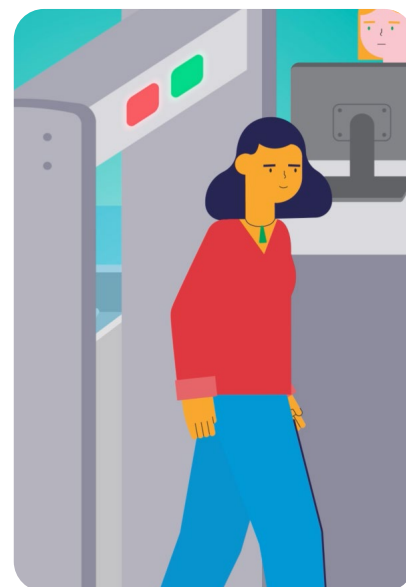
### International flights



Maximum of 350mls (grams) of some powders or granular materials.



Maximum 100mls container for liquids.



[Click here for the AvSec Screening Information video](#)

## About our equipment

### Walk-through metal detector

This is the first 'gate' you walk through.

A wireless medical device (e.g. a continuous glucose monitor or insulin pump), is likely to trigger the walk-through metal detector's alarm, but this is not a cause for concern.



### Full body scanners

Due to an alarm on the walk-through metal detector, or by random selection by the technology, you will be asked to go through the body scanner.

**You must tell the officer if you have a medical device, including a continuous glucose monitor or insulin pump.**

These medical devices may malfunction if exposed to the full body scanners.

A pat-down search will need to be performed instead.



While our model has chosen to show the officer her sensor, it's sufficient just to tell the officer. If you wish to show them, you can also request to do so in a private area.



### X-ray machines for carry-on baggage

**You must tell the officer if you have a medical device in your carry-on baggage.**

These medical devices may malfunction if exposed to x-ray machines.

The officer will visually check the device instead, searching your bag by hand.

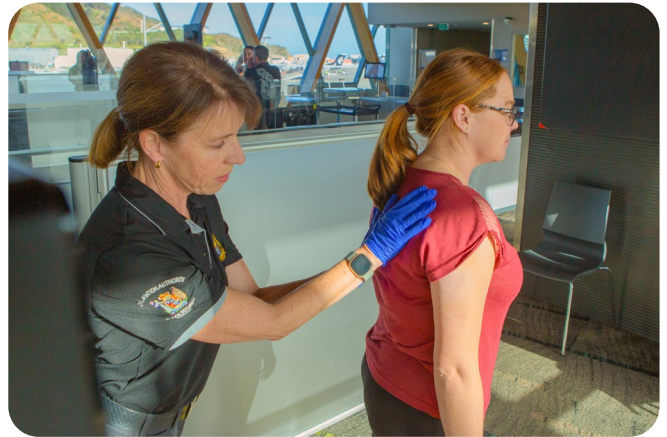


## What happens next?

Our officers are trained to handle a wide range of scenarios that deviate from the standard procedure, including for passengers travelling with medical devices. They have all received information on the procedures for different medical devices.

The officer will request to view the device and perform a pat-down search. You can request for this to occur in private, out of the view of others. You can request a person you are travelling with to be present during the search.

A pat-down search involves an officer, of the same gender, running or patting their hand over the clothed areas of your person.



Before the pat-down starts\*, you should show them your device and if there are any areas that may cause discomfort, let the officer know.

## Aviation Security Service tips for a stress-free experience

- Stay calm and be patient - it's normal for our officers to ask questions and it may be the first time an officer has encountered your device. Therefore they may take some time to recall their training and they may need to refer to their operations manual or ask their Team Leader.
- Don't take it personally - our officers are tasked with detecting people who want to intentionally cause harm to the aviation system, so it's their job to make sure that you aren't one of those people. This doesn't mean you have done anything wrong.
- Communicate clearly - security screening is a busy fast-paced environment and misunderstandings sometimes happen, so the clearer the communication the less likely any problems arise.
- Be prepared and organised - with preparation and clear communication, your device won't hinder a smooth and enjoyable travel experience.
- Wear your device as usual and be ready to show it if needed.
- Make sure your device is easily accessible in your carry-on baggage so it can be hand-searched.
- Give yourself plenty of time to get through screening.

## Additional assistance available

New Zealand airports are participants in the international Hidden Disabilities Sunflower scheme. This provides a Hidden Disability Sunflower lanyard to travellers to wear at the airport who wish to indicate they may need extra support, guidance, understanding, or time. Aviation Security Service and airport staff are trained to recognise the sunflower lanyard and to provide extra help or time.

Prior to your travel you can request a free lanyard from the airport company, which you can collect at the airport to keep on and use on future trips. For further information see the [Hidden Disabilities website](#).

If you have special requirements, please contact your airline, and make sure they are aware of any assistance you may require.

\*Handheld metal detectors - wands - are no longer routinely used in New Zealand so the pat-down is the only alternative to the body scanner.