

Brexit

There has been no change to the rights and status of EU nationals in the UK, and UK nationals in the EU, as the UK prepares to leave the EU.

Although it's not a direct replacement for travel insurance, the European Health Insurance Card (EHIC) provides millions of us with free health-care on the continent.

The EHIC will continue to be valid as long as Britain is in the EU. Article 50 is the formal intention of Britain's intent to withdraw from the EU. There will now be a two-year negotiation period – and your trusty EHIC card will still work as long as negotiations are taking place. The EHIC works in Switzerland and Iceland, which are in Europe but not the EU, and Britain could reach a similar deal with the EU to continue use of the EHIC.

(Based on latest information at 30th March, 2017)

<https://www.gov.uk/european-health-insurance-card>

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The National Kidney Federation cannot accept responsibility for information provided. the above is for guidance only. Patients are advised to seek further information from their own doctor.

HOLIDAY GUIDELINES FOR HAEMODIALYSIS PATIENTS



www.kidney.org.uk

The NKF - the largest Kidney Patient charity in the UK
A federation of more than fifty patient charities, supporting kidney patients & carers

NKF(National Kidney Federation)
The Point, Coach Road, Shireoaks, Worksop, Nottinghamshire, S81 8BW
Charity No 1106735 Company No 5272349 Reg. in England & Wales Give as you earn contributions No CAFGY511



www.kidney.org.uk

HELPLINE 0800 169 09 36



Find a unit

Finding a suitable unit for HD will mean you may need to be a little more flexible in terms of choice of destination, since obviously you will need to be in easy reach of an HD unit which can accommodate you. There are plenty of exotic locations with HD units, and even special cruises designed for dialysis patients. See the NKF Holiday facilities for kidney patients guide for details of units in the UK and around the world.

Keep your renal unit advised of any research you are doing directly - they may need to give you certain criteria (eg infection control policy) for your "holiday" unit.

What to ask of a Dialysis Unit before booking

Before selecting an overseas clinic for your holiday dialysis, you are advised to write to the chosen hospital to ask:

1. Do they accept visitors?
2. Specify the date you would like to go.
3. (if in the European Union) Are they a state-run hospital or a private clinic?
4. Will there be a charge? If so how much per dialysis session?
5. Do they accept EH1C for dialysis?
6. Do they accept patients who have tested positive for Hepatitis, HIV or Aids? (it is not recommended that you dialyse in a unit which accepts these patients)

If you are satisfied with the answers and wish to proceed, then ask your renal consultant to make the necessary arrangements. The receiving hospital will require medical details and there is a standard form E111D which should be completed by your hospital doctor. Some units have their own form instead of E111D.

Organise assistance at ports, airports etc

If you tire easily, or have problems with mobility, most airports now offer wheelchairs and/or chauffeured "buggies", which will whisk you through check-in, the departure procedures and passport control in minutes. Ferry ports, railway stations and many special attractions also offer this type of assistance. You will need to book this in advance - your travel agent should be able to help you or you can simply ring direct to see what help is available and book your buggy.

Transportation to the unit

Make sure you make arrangements for travel to and from the unit you will be using while on holiday. The unit at your destination may be able to help you with this, or your hotel may be able to arrange a taxi for you. If you make the arrangements for transportation, make sure you allow plenty of time, and take into account extra time for rush hour if the times of your appointments make it likely you will get caught in this.

Differences in treatment

Bear in mind that there may be slight differences in the equipment and procedures used by the unit you visit than those you are used to. Discuss what these might be with your "home" renal unit in advance so you are not taken unawares.

Some units/clinics do not offer injections of lignocaine before needling but pop the needles right in. Take your own lignocaine if you feel you will need it.

The Eurodial website has lists of useful phrases for HD patients, such as "the arterial needle is placed here", "I normally dialyse at ...mn Hg positive and ...mn Hg negative pressure" and "May I have a blanket" in French, Spanish, German and Italian.

Costs

Make sure you are aware of any costs involved for your dialysis while on holiday. Some countries have reciprocal arrangements with the UK for dialysis (including the countries covered by EH1C). However, since the reciprocal agreements allow UK citizens the same care as would be provided to the citizens of the country you are visiting, there may be a portion of the cost which you will need to pay.

Spain

If you are visiting Spain, you will need a special Spanish form called a P10, which you will need to obtain before leaving the UK if requested. Your UK renal unit will organise this for you.

Swimming

Check with your renal unit for advice regarding swimming or any other sports you want to try while on holiday.