

Medical Care while travelling

Fit to fly? Read up on what medical care is available in-flight and other useful healthcare information.

When is air travel not recommended?

Travel by air is not recommended in the following cases:

i) Infants less than two days old.

ii) Women:

- After 32nd week of pregnancy for those with multiple pregnancies (e.g. twins).
- After 35th week of pregnancy for international flights.
- After 36th week of pregnancy for domestic sectors.
- Until seven days after delivery.

iii) Those suffering from:

- Angina pectoris or chest pain at rest.
- Serious or acute infectious disease.
- Decompression sickness after diving.
- Increased intracranial pressure due to haemorrhage, trauma or infection.
- Infections of the sinuses or infections of the ear and nose, particularly if the Eustachian tube is blocked.
- Skull fracture, if the sinuses are involved.
- Recent myocardial infarction and stroke (time period depending on severity of illness and duration of travel).
- Recent surgery or injury where trapped air or gas may be present, especially abdominal trauma and gastrointestinal surgery, cranio-facial and ocular injuries, brain operations, eye operations and penetrating injuries of the eyeball.
- Severe chronic respiratory disease, breathlessness at rest, or unresolved pneumothorax.
- Psychotic illness, except when fully controlled with medication.

What medical care is available in the air?

Malaysia Airlines/MASwings carries millions of passengers each year, yet medical incidents are fortunately rare. The most common in-flight medical incidents are fainting,

stomach upsets and giddiness. Cabin crews are equipped with basic medical training and the aircraft with medical supplies to ensure passenger health and safety during flights.

Cabin crew medical training

Cabin crews are trained in the use of first-aid equipment and in carrying out basic first-aid and resuscitation procedures. They are also trained to recognise a range of medical conditions that may cause emergencies on board and to act appropriately to manage these.

Medical equipment onboard

The medical kits onboard MASwings. Equipment carried would include:

- one or more first-aid kits, to be used by the crew.

Medical indemnity

Although Malaysia Airlines/MASwings cabin crews are trained to handle onboard medical incidents, there may be occasions when an unexpected medical emergency occurs requiring attention outside the realm of their training. This may necessitate our cabin crew making a request for a suitably trained medical professional to voluntarily identify themselves and help in providing medical assistance to an injured or ill person onboard the aircraft.

Passengers who identify themselves as medical professionals will be asked to show relevant identification and/or provide details of medical qualifications to our crew upon request.

To the extent permitted by law, Malaysia Airlines/MASwings will indemnify the medical volunteer against legal liability that may arise from their assistance or treatment given onboard the aircraft.

What other medical info might I need to know?

Travelling with medicines

You are advised to carry your medication in your hand luggage, in case you need it. You should also carry a copy of the prescription or a supporting written statement from your doctor in case the medication is lost, additional supplies are needed or security or custom checks require proof that it is for personal use.

Travelling while pregnant

If you are travelling during pregnancy, you will require a letter from your doctor stating the duration of pregnancy and any risk factors. The following are periods not recommended for women to travel:

- After 32nd week of pregnancy for those with multiple pregnancies (e.g. twins).
 - After 35th week of pregnancy for international flights.
 - After 36th week of pregnancy for domestic sectors.
 - Until seven days after delivery.
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Passengers with disability or passengers with a chronic stable disease

Information and services for flying with a disability

Upon ticket reservation

To ensure that your needs are met with utmost care, it is important that you inform our service staff of your disability or that of your charge's upon ticket reservation so that we can help you make all the arrangements necessary.

- To reserve flight tickets through our staff, please call 1 300 88 3000 if you are within Malaysia or +603 7843 3000 if you are overseas.
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Passengers with walking disabilities

Depending on your/your charge's mobility level, special arrangements can be made for your flight – particularly with regard to seating. Most international airports are wheelchair-friendly, with ease of access to common facilities. Should you need additional on-ground or in-flight support, please contact our service staff for further assistance.

- Passengers with certain physical handicaps may qualify for rebates on fares. They will need to present their OKU (Orang Kurang Upaya) identification cards to Malaysia Airlines prior to issuance of tickets.
 - Some passengers with walking disabilities may require medical clearance before flying. For more information, please call our service staff at 1 300 88 3000 if you are within Malaysia or +603 7843 3000 if you are overseas.
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Passengers with sight disabilities

Passengers with sight disabilities who present their OKU (Orang Kurang Upaya) identification cards upon ticket reservation enjoy a special rebate on our flights. Additionally, each disabled passenger must be accompanied by an escort throughout the entire journey.

Passengers on stretchers

Depending on aircraft space available and the severity of the passenger's condition, Malaysia Airlines/MASwings accommodates certain stretcher cases – although subject to strict guidelines and procedures. Please contact our service staff for more information should you have any queries.

- Stretcher cases must always be accompanied by medically qualified personnel unless prior exemption has been obtained from the company's doctor. The accompanying passenger is also to look after the stretcher case passenger's toilet needs
 - To speak to our staff, please call 1 300 88 3000 if you are within Malaysia or +603 7843 3000 if you are overseas.
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For passengers with a disability, kindly forward all written enquiries to:

Medical Services Manager (Aviation)
MAS Medical Centre
Malaysia Airlines Bhd
Ground Floor Admin Building 3
Sultan Abdul Aziz Shah Airport
47200 Subang
Selangor Darul Ehsan
Malaysia
Fax: +603 7846 2626

If you need mobility assistance (e.g. wheelchair, buggy) at the airport, please contact the Hospitality Desk at the airport, so that transport from the terminal to the aircraft can be arranged.

Immobility and circulatory problems (DVT)

Prolonged immobility, especially when seated, can lead to pooling of blood in the legs, which in turn may cause swelling, stiffness and discomfort. It is known that immobility is one of the factors that may lead to the development of a blood clot in a deep vein, also called "deep vein thrombosis" or DVT. As a precaution, moving around the cabin or doing simple exercises during long flights will help to reduce any period of prolonged immobility. To reduce the risk of DVT, we recommend the following measures for all our passengers:

- Avoid high consumption of caffeine and alcoholic beverages as these cause dehydration.
 - Increase consumption of other fluids, especially water or fruit juices to improve body hydration. In this respect, our cabin staffs have been advised to serve water and fruit juices more frequently to passengers.
 - Do simple regular in-flight workouts. One such exercise is to raise the buttocks and thighs off the seats while seated and at the same time squeeze the toes and contract the calf muscles. Another exercise is to straighten and bend both legs at the knee while seated. Both these exercises will improve blood circulation.
 - Wear loose-fitting comfortable clothing.
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Pacemaker

It is safe to fly with a pacemaker provided that your cardiac condition is stable. However, some issues that may be of concern are during the security screening procedures at the airport. Passing through an airport metal detector won't interfere with your pacemaker, although the metal in it may sound the alarm.

Avoid lingering near or leaning against a metal-detection system. If security personnel insist on using a hand-held metal detector, ask them not to hold the device near your pacemaker any longer than necessary. To avoid potential problems, carry an ID card stating that you have a pacemaker. In addition to that general advice, you should check with your own doctor and read the instructions from the manufacturer of your own model of pacemaker to find out whether the pacemaker you have is more sensitive to the metal detection equipment.

Smokers

Smoking is not permitted onboard Malaysia Airlines flights. Passengers who smoke heavily and regularly may experience stress and discomfort, particularly during long flights. Heavy smokers may benefit from medical advice before travelling. Nicotine replacement patches or chewing gum may be helpful and the use of a mild tranquilliser can be considered.

Travelling with own medical equipment

Medical clearance is required for the use of most medical equipment onboard to confirm that you are fit to fly and to ensure that the medical equipment does not interrupt the avionics of the aircraft. All personal medical equipment should have sufficient battery power to last one and a half times the journey length (150% travel time). Only dry cell or gel batteries are permitted onboard for safety reasons.

All medical equipment that needs to be used onboard will require a Medical Information Form (MEDIF). The [MEDIF application form \(PDF\)](#) should be completed by your attending doctor and submitted to Malaysia Airlines through our [ticketing offices](#) or travel agents at least five working days before the intended date of travel.

Approved portable oxygen concentrators (POCs) are permitted on board for use during your flight provided a [MEDIF application form \(PDF\)](#) has been submitted and approved.

These do not count towards your carry-on baggage limit. All medical equipment to be used on board will require medical clearance.

The passenger who plans to use the device must provide a written statement signed by a licensed doctor that verifies the passenger's ability to operate the device, respond to any alarms, the extent to which the passenger must use the POC (all or a portion of the flight), and prescribes the maximum oxygen flow rate required.

All POCs approved by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) will be accepted onboard. Currently approved POC models are:

- AirSep FreeStyle
- AirSep LifeStyle
- Delphi Central Air
- Devilbiss iGo
- Inogen One
- Inogen One G2
- International Biophysics LifeChoice
- Invacare Solo2
- Phillips Respironics EverGo
- SeQual Eclipse
- Oxlife Independence

Oxygen

Should there be a need for supplemental oxygen during your travel as advised by your doctor, you are required to make the necessary booking at least five working days before your intended date of travel.

Kindly download the [MEDIF application form \(PDF\)](#) and ask your physician to fill it up and submit it to your nearest Malaysia Airlines [ticketing office](#) or travel agent.

If you have such medical equipment or oxygen requirements, we strongly advise that you contact 1 300 88 3000 (within Malaysia), +603 7843 3000 (outside Malaysia) or your nearest Malaysia Airlines [ticketing office](#) before booking your flight. This is to ensure that you have a safe and comfortable journey with us.

Stress, fatigue and jet lag

Jet lag refers to the disruption of sleep patterns and other circadian rhythms, which result from abrupt changes in time zones. Jet lag may lead to insomnia, indigestion, reduced physical and mental performance and general malaise. The adverse effects of jet lag can be reduced by the use of effective measures. Some of these measures include:

- Be well rested before departure and rest as much as possible during the flight. Ensure that you have as much sleep as possible for every 24 hour cycle when travelling, as you would at home and use opportunities to take short naps regularly. In the case of short trips, it may not always be appropriate to adjust to local time – if in doubt, seek specialist advice.
- Wear loose comfortable clothing.
- Drink plenty of water and/or juices before and throughout the flight.
- Eat light meals. Limit your consumption of tea, coffee and alcohol both before and during the flight.
- Upon arrival, some may find it beneficial to use short-acting sleeping pills to facilitate the adjustment of sleep patterns. However, use these only under medical supervision and ensure that they have been tried and tested at home before you use them on your trip.
- Stay out in the natural daylight or in brightly lit areas to help adjust more quickly to the time zone of the destination.

Travellers who take medication on a strict schedule (e.g. insulin, contraceptive pills) should seek medical advice.

Divers

Divers should not fly soon after diving because of the risk that the reduced cabin pressure may lead to decompression sickness (the bends). It is recommended that they do not fly until at least 12 hours after their last dive and this period should be extended to 24 hours after multiple dives or after diving that requires decompression stops during ascent to the surface.

Who needs medical clearance and how do I obtain it?

Medical clearance is required to assess an individual's fitness to fly. Passengers requiring medical clearance are those who may:

- be suffering from acute or chronic diseases that need supplemental oxygen or medical equipment on board aircraft
- be flying after an illness or operation and may aggravate their condition due to the flight environment
- be travelling with their own medical equipment such as ventilators, infusion pumps and suction apparatus
- be considered a potential hazard to the safety of the aircraft, other passengers or crew members

Malaysia Airlines/MASwings reserves the right to refuse to carry passengers with conditions where adverse effects or hazard may result during the flight. When a cabin crew suspects that a passenger may be ill, the Commander of the aircraft will be informed and a decision will be taken on whether the passenger is fit to travel.

If medical clearance is required, the [MEDIF application form \(PDF\)](#) should be completed by your attending doctor and submitted to Malaysia Airlines through our [ticketing offices](#) or travel agents at least five working days before the intended date of travel.

Note:

The information provided in this website is for informational purposes only and are not exhaustive. They are not intended in any way to serve as medical advice or its substitute. Please consult your health care professional regarding your health or specific medical questions that you may have. Malaysia Airlines/MASwings will not be held responsible for any misuse of information or adverse effects of recommendations howsoever arising from or connected with the usage of information as stated in this website.