

## WHAT DO YOU NEED TO TAKE WITH YOU?

Wherever you go, remember to take your ICD identification card and any emergency documentation with you.

If you are flying, you should have a card or a note from us that advises the airline security personnel not to put you through the metal detector or to use the hand-held wand on you.

*Although we advise you not to go through the security alarms we have found that some overseas airports take no notice of this advice unfortunately.*

*However do not worry too much if someone forces you through a security control. Just walk through as fast as possible and do not worry. You are more likely to trigger the alarms than cause any problems to your ICD.*

It is also useful if you are on medications to take a full list of all drugs and doses with you.

If you need vaccinations or inoculations or preventive medicine in some countries don't forget to check with us or your doctor in case there are any clashes with the drugs you are already taking. This particularly applies to anti-malarial drugs and cardiac anti-arrhythmic drugs.

**IF YOU HAVE BEEN GIVEN A MAGNET THEN YOU SHOULD TAKE IT WITH YOU.**

We will provide a letter for you to take explaining the reason for having a magnet which you can show at the airport if questioned.

**DON'T FORGET THE SUNTAN LOTION AND THE HATS - PARTICULARLY IF YOU ARE ON AMIODARONE!!**

## EMERGENCIES

If you do find yourself in trouble the best thing to do is to assess the situation as if you were at home.

1. Do you feel well enough to get home? If so try and get your travel arrangements brought forward.
2. Do you feel unwell but not really bad enough to go to an emergency centre?

We have had patients call us to discuss whether they do need help or not. We're here if you want us so feel free to call. Even if you are at the other end of the world we'll get back to you.

3. If it is an emergency just take all your information with you and find your nearest contact that we found for you. If you are not happy get them to contact us.
4. There will always be somebody to help if it is an emergency so try not to worry too much.

**Choose what's appropriate for you and ENJOY it.**



## **Living with an ICD?** **All you need to know about ...**

### **TRAVEL**



Patient Information Leaflet  
for People Living with an  
Internal Cardioverter Defibrillator (ICD)

*If you would like to meet other people living with an ICD, then why not come along to the ICD Club.*

*It is based in West Surrey but is open to anyone living in Surrey*

Contact Ian Clement on  
01932 722530 or email  
[ian.clement@asph.nhs.uk](mailto:ian.clement@asph.nhs.uk)

## CAN YOU TRAVEL ANYWHERE?

Having an ICD implanted makes no difference to whether you can travel or not.

What makes the difference is how well you are and how at risk you are likely to be if you find yourself stranded somewhere with no emergency cardiac cover.

Some people with ICDs will have no problem at all and others will need to be a little cautious about where and how far they go depending on how serious their condition is and how well they are generally.

Before booking or planning holidays find out from your ICD centre or your doctor what they advise and what precautions you should take.

It is probably advisable to get a check-up before you go, particularly if you are going for any length of time.

## HOLIDAY INSURANCE

As with all medical conditions, insurance may be a problem for ICD patients.

We keep a list of insurance companies that are ICD friendly and that we know have either insured one of our patients or are known to provide reasonable cover for other patients with heart problems.

Some insurance companies require written confirmation from your cardiologist or us that you are fit to travel and fulfil certain conditions. This varies depending on the company. Some patients have had no problems at all.

If an insurance company tries to load your insurance to a level that you consider outrageous or tries to give you totally unrealistic conditions, it is best to shop around for another company rather than pay exorbitant premiums.

If flying, the airline may want a certificate of fitness to travel and if you give us a call that can be provided for you at quite short notice.

It has been reported that certain airlines have insisted that patients with ICDs will be charged extra as they MUST have oxygen available. This is nonsense and again a call to your local ICD centre should stop that.

Again your fitness to get insurance will depend on your underlying condition and state of health and some patients will have fewer problems than others.

Royal Surrey County Hospital

NHS Foundation Trust

Ashford and St. Peter's Hospitals

NHS Trust

Epsom and St. Helier  
University Hospitals

NHS Trust

Frimley Park Hospital

NHS Foundation Trust

Surrey and Sussex  
Healthcare NHS Trust

Adapted for use in Surrey Nov 2010 with  
permission from St. George's Hospital NHS Trust

## EMERGENCY CONTACTS: UK & OVERSEAS

A full list of UK ICD centres is available through your own ICD centre and from Heart Rhythm UK:

[www.hruk.org.uk](http://www.hruk.org.uk)

If you are travelling overseas there are ICD implant centres in most countries. However the expertise in these centres varies and obviously if you are considered to be at higher risk we will not recommend going to some areas in case of problems.

When you know where and when you are travelling contact your local ICD centre for a name and telephone number in the country to which you are going.

**Please give us a little notice as it sometimes takes time to get hold of this information.**

Most Western European countries USA/Canada, Australia, New Zealand and countries with more advanced technology will have ICD centres but many third world countries do not yet have the expertise so do find out if you are covered before booking that really exotic trip.

**Please note that we cannot guarantee the quality of care you may get in any centre therefore can only give you a contact in case of emergencies or problems.**