Airplane Travel Tips for Patients On Home Dialysis Therapies

- **Planning.** Call the airline to see if they have a Disability or Special Assistance Coordinator. This person can explain and help you navigate the airline rules.

- **Machine.** The Air Carrier Access Act (ACAA) of 1990 protects people with disabilities from discrimination and designates your portable dialysis machine as an ‘assistive device’, which means it can not be counted as one of your allowable carry on item or checked bags.
  - **PD Cycler.** Some cyclers may fit in the overhead bin or under the seat in front of you on the plane. Measure your PD cycler when packed in its case and check the airline’s carry-on size limit to see if it will fit on the plane. If it doesn’t fit, then ask to have it checked at the door of the plane (as they do for strollers, car seats, wheelchairs, etc.). Checking it at the door is a much better option than sending it as “checked luggage” sparing the machine from being tossed around during baggage handling.
  - **NxStage System One.** This machine is too large to fit in any airplane cabin and can only go as checked luggage. Per ACAA 1990, you cannot be charged when you check your machine as baggage; nor is it subject to an overweight fee.

- **Medications.** Always take all your medications in your carry-on bag. If you bring syringes, you must also bring along the drug you inject (ie. Insulin or EPO). The drug must be professionally labeled with the name of the drug clearly printed. Airplanes don’t provide refrigeration. Ask your dialysis nurse and/or pharmacist about which medications needs to be kept cold. With your nurse, figure out the best way to pack the drug(s) for your trip.

- **Dialystate.** Ask your WellBound staff how to order the boxes of dialysate you’ll need during your trip; these supplies can be shipped to where you’ll be staying. Plan to bring a 1-2 day supply of dialysate with you on the airplane; be sure to bring the packages in their original boxes, with the contents clearly labeled.

For help planning your next trip or if you have questions, talk to your social worker.

Want to learn more? Read articles on HHD travel at www.homedialysis.org.

(Source: www.homedialysis.org)