



## Introduction

This guide was created as part of a collaboration between the Access & Support Centre and International Education Office at Durham College to support faculty and students with disabilities participating in global learning opportunities. Global learning opportunities can have a powerful impact on students. These experiences can enhance academic and career readiness skills and encourage personal growth. This resource guide was designed to promote inclusivity and reduce barriers in global learning programs for students with disabilities. The guide is organized by disability related impacts and highlights important considerations for travel along with links to various resources and websites.

We recognize that every student is unique and has individual needs so not all considerations and tips provided in the guide will be applicable for everyone. It is also important to note that Accessibility standards can vary greatly between countries. Travelers are encouraged to contact the destination country's [embassy or consulate in Canada](#) to find out about the availability of services for travelers' with disabilities.

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# Mental Health

The Canadian Mental Health Association reports that 1 in 5 Canadians will experience a mental health problem in any given year. Furthermore, by age 40 approximately 50% of people will have or had a mental health concern. Travelling can be exciting and stressful for many reasons. The overall stress of travel may trigger pre-existing mental health conditions or in some cases undiagnosed problems may become apparent for the first time. Mental illness is often an under recognized public health concern and travelers may not be able to access adequate emergency psychiatric care. Local perceptions about mental health in the destination country may cause additional stress as travelers may not want to disclose for fears of dealing with stigmas, negative attitudes, and behaviors toward their mental illness. (Source: <https://covertrip.com/travel-safety-tips/travel-abroad-with-a-mental-illness>)

## Mental Health and Travel Considerations

- Sleep is often impacted while travelling (noise levels, time zone changes etc)
- Travel is often costly and may cause financial concerns
- Changes to existing routines such as exercise and diet and possible increase in alcohol consumption/substance use
- Reduced availability and access to support systems
- Feelings of homesickness or loneliness
- Medications may be impacted
- Environmental conditions such as extreme heat
- Cultural differences relating to boundaries, personal space, etc

## Tips

- Disclosing your mental health/psychiatric condition to your home institution/study abroad coordinator so they can support you to explore your options and adequately prepare for your travel experience
- Speak to your current mental health practitioner about your travel plans so that can help you prepare
- If you take medications, you will want to ensure you have enough to last your trip. It is important to make sure that your medication is legal in the host country. You can contact your local consulate to determine this in advance. It is important to carry your medication in their original labelled pill bottles.
- Review your insurance coverage prior to your trip

## Resources

CAMH Mental Health 101 <https://www.camh.ca/en/health-info/mental-health-101>

CMHA Anxiety Disorders <https://cmha.ca/brochure/anxiety->

# Chronic Illness and Medical

The physical and emotional demands of travel may increase the risk of a flare up of symptoms for travellers with chronic health or medical conditions. In addition, certain medications that are used to manage chronic health conditions may make travelers more at risk to contracting viruses or infections (ie steroids for autoimmune conditions or asthma). Planning in advance can help to keep you healthy and ensure a safe trip (Source: <https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/page/chronic-illnesses>)

## Considerations for travelling with Chronic Illness or Medical Concerns

- Changes to routines with sleep, eating and medications and additional stress may trigger flare ups of reM1sior or/pa ig12 (pa (t)7 (oni)6 (c)J2C20Tc 0 Tw 3.89 0 Td( )TjEMC /L9ody /MCID 5 BDC



# Blind and Low Vision

# Deaf and Hard of Hearing

Travelling while deaf or hard of hearing will likely pose certain challenges, but with sufficient preparation it can also be a fulfilling learning experience. Safety will need to be considered as different countries may have standards that do not meet your needs in terms of alarms, announcements, etc. Airports, bus stations, and train stations may make announcements that are not posted on signage regarding changes to boarding gates, platforms, or cancellations. These barriers do not mean that travel can not be just as fun and exciting as hoped for, but researching and preparing for obstacles will allow for as smooth a trip as possible.

## Travel Considerations and Tips

- Have your hearing aids/cochlear implant checked by your audiologist prior to leaving
- Pack spare hearing aid batteries
- Ask for everything to be confirmed in writing (prices, dates, arrangements, etc)
- Contact hotel to inquire about any accommodations for deaf or hard of hearing guests (i.e. visible smoke alarm, captioned television)
- Notify hotel staff that you may not hear knocking on doors, alarms, or phones
- Most airports have induction loops, public textphones, and public amplified telephones
- You may want to consider carrying a pen/notebook with you for emergency communication
- A live transcription app may also be useful

Source: <https://www.hearinglink.org/living/out-about/travelling/>

## Resources

Tips for Prep Before Travel:

<https://www.hearinglink.org/living/out-about/travelling/>

Travel Tips for the Hearing Impaired:

<https://earnosethroatmebeP7mEwjEo>

# Neurodiversity

Changes to routine, crowded tourist destinations, busy airports, and new foods are all likely to be encountered while travelling, and these can also pose certain challenges for those who are neurodivergent. Understanding your needs and being as prepared to meet these challenges will make your travels as smooth as possible.

Haley Moss identifies as autistic, and shares her best tips for travel:

<https://www.milestones.org/resources/blog/2019/11/06/autistic-while-traveling-haley-moss-top-tips-for-a-successful-trip>.



# Airport/Border Security

## Helpful Tips

- Consider contacting the airline to inquire about restrictions on any medication, mobility aids, assistive devices, etc. and advise if assistance is required with mobility aids/carry-on items
- Determine what items you can keep in carry-on. If you might need medication on the flight is it easily accessible?
- Ask if you are you eligible for priority boarding
- Contact CBSA (Canada Border Services Agency) if you need assistance with border clearance (steps of the process, completing declaration, providing verbal or visual cues); they may also be able to provide alternate format instructions
- Use special services counter line for CBSA

## Resources

### Canada Border Services Agency – Traveling with a disability

<https://www.cbsa-asfc.gc.ca/travel-voyage/disability-handicap-eng.html>

### Government of Canada guide for Travelling with Disabilities

<https://travel.gc.ca/travelling/health-safety/disabilities>

### Toronto Pearson Airport Accessibility

<https://www.torontopearson.com/en/accessibility>

### Travelling with a Disability, CDC

<https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/page/disability>

### Toronto Pearson Airport: Arranging for wheelchair and mobility assistance:

<https://www.torontopearson.com/en/accessibility/mobility-wheelchair-services>

### European Network for Accessible Tourism

[www.accessibletourism.org](http://www.accessibletourism.org)

### Society for Accessible Travel and Hospitality

[www.sath.org](http://www.sath.org)



## **Travelling with a Service Animal**

If you are planning to travel with a service animal, you will need to plan your trip well in advance. Some sources recommend planning a 6mths to 1-year in advance. You will need to determine the