

# Medication, Travel and You

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## Outline

- Drug Plans & Vacation Supplies
- How to pack medications
- Days supply you can take
- Documentation to bring
- Mailing prescriptions across the border
- Bringing medications back to Canada
- Immunization & other considerations for seniors



## Drug Plans & Vacation Supplies

- Nova Scotia Pharmacare (MSI)
  - Vacation supply is permitted for seniors
  - Split claim into two claims
  - Max 90 day supply each
  - Submit second claim next day
  - Total 6 month vacation supply



## Drug Plans & Vacation Supplies

- Nova Scotia Pharmacare (MSI)
  - No reimbursement outside of Canada, emergency or otherwise
  - Consider private travel health insurance



## Drug Plans & Vacation Supplies

- Medavie Blue Cross
  - Patient can fill a normal 3 month supply as per usual (\*2/3 rule)
  - Addition supply CANNOT be billed online
  - If patient requires additional 3 months, must pay and submit receipt
  - Receipt should indicate second claim is for vacation supply



## Drug Plans & Vacation Supplies

- Telus Health Solutions
  - Great West Life, Sunlife
    - 100 days supply allowed (\*2/3 rule)
    - If additional supply required, patient pays the difference and can submit receipt as manual claim to insurance with explanation
    - Some plans have special authorization exceptions



## Drug Plans & Vacation Supplies

- Express Scripts Canada (ESI)
  - Patient has to make request to insurance company (to benefits administrator)
  - Once approved, generally claim is direct bill



## Drug Plans & Vacation Supplies

What if I have two drug plans??

- It gets even more complicated!
- Talk to your pharmacy team member



## Drug Plans & Vacation Supplies

- Summary

- Know what drug plan you have
- Know the process
- Talk to your pharmacy team in advance of travel
- Make sure you have refills from the MD to cover the days supply you need
- Be prepared to pay up front and submit if you are not on seniors Pharmacare



# How much can I take into the US?

- 3 month supply
- Anything more has the *potential* to be seized by Customs

U.S. Customs and Border Protection  
**Customs Declaration**  
FORM 1041 (REV. 04-15) (MAY 2015) USE IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE U.S. CUSTOMS AND BORDER PROTECTION (CBP) TRAVELER'S GUIDE TO THE U.S. Each arriving traveler or responsible family member must provide the following information (only ONCE, written declaration per family is required).

- Family Name: First, Last, Middle
- Birth date: Day, Month, Year
- Number of Family members traveling with you
- (a) U.S. Street Address (hotel name/destination)
- (b) City (c) State
- Passport issued by (country)
- Passport number
- Country of Residence
- Countries visited on this trip (prior to U.S. arrival)
- Airline/Flight No. or Vessel Name
- The primary purpose of this trip is business: Yes No
- I am (We are) bringing:
  - (a) fruits, vegetables, plants, seeds, food, insects: Yes No
  - (b) meats, animals, animal/wildlife products: Yes No
  - (c) disease agents, cell cultures, stains: Yes No
  - (d) soil or herbs on a farm/branch/estate: Yes No
- I have (We have) been in close proximity of (such as touching or handling) livestock: Yes No
- I am (We are) carrying currency or monetary instruments over \$10,000 U.S. or foreign equivalent (see definition of monetary instruments on reverse): Yes No
- I have (We have) commercial merchandise (articles for sale, samples used for soliciting orders, or goods that are not considered personal effects): Yes No
- Residents — the total value of all goods, including commercial merchandise I/we have purchased or acquired abroad, (including gifts for someone else, but not items mailed to the U.S.) and airfare belonging to the U.S.: \$  
 Visitors — the total value of all articles that will remain in the U.S., including commercial merchandise in: \$

Read the instructions on the back of this form. Space is provided to list all the items you must declare.  
**I HAVE READ THE IMPORTANT INFORMATION ON THE REVERSE SIDE OF THIS FORM AND HAVE MADE A TRUTHFUL DECLARATION.**

Departure Date (day/month/year)



How am I going to fit that in my suitcase?!



## How to Pack Medications

- Keep medication in original, labelled containers
  - Label must have your name (as it appears on your passport), name of pharmacy, name of drug and dose
- Don't combine medication into one bottle to save space
- Keep your medication in your carry on, in case your checked luggage gets lost

## How to Pack Medications

- Pack an extra supply in case you are there longer
- Remember to bring other necessary items in your carry on:
  - Glucose test strips
  - Sugar tabs
  - etc.



## Side note...

- OTC, homeopathic, herbal, dietary supplements
  - May be illegal in other countries or may require prescription
  - Check with embassy of destination country before departure if you take something unusual



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## Documentation to Bring

- Bring a copy of your original prescription written by your doctor
  - You'll need this if your medication gets lost or stolen
- Keep a record of each drug's brand and generic name
  - You'll need this as different countries have different brand names for drugs

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## Documentation to Bring

- List of medical conditions & drug allergies
- List of when (am, pm) and how medications are taken (oral, topical)
- Family doctor phone number and address
- Name, address, phone number of your pharmacy
- Emergency contact person
- Consider Medical Alert bracelet



## NS Basic Medication Review

### BE A.W.A.R.E.

**Ask** your pharmacist about your medications.

**Work** with your pharmacist to keep your medication record current.

**Always** keep this list updated if something changes in your regimen.

**Report** to your pharmacist when doses are changed in hospital.

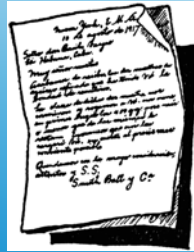
**Educate** yourself on what you are taking and why.

[www.managemymeds.ca](http://www.managemymeds.ca)



## Documentation to Bring

- Travelling with Narcotic Medications
  - Have a letter from MD to confirm treatment



## Needles & Syringes

- Needles, syringes, lancets are permitted as long as accompanied with prescription medication
- Medication must be labeled with drug name and pharmacy information
- Carry a medical certificate or explanation from MD/PhC
- Exempt from 100 ml maximum for liquids

## Mailing drugs across the border

- Food and Drug Administration (FDA) says NO
- But...



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## Mailing drugs across the border

- Narcotics cannot be mailed under any circumstance
- Prescriptions cannot be mailed to US citizens
- All packages may be scrutinized by Customs



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## Mailing drugs across the border

- Prescription drugs mailed to Canadian citizens should contain:
  - A copy of the original prescription
  - A copy of a document showing proof of Canadian citizenship
  - A letter from MD explaining patient is under their care & circumstances for mailing addressed to Customs & Border Protection (CPB) officer
  - Mark outside package "Contains Physician Letter"



## Mailing drugs across the border

- Remember... the package *could* be detained by Customs until FDA inspector examines it
- Consider courier service



## Bringing medications into Canada



- Health Canada will allow you, as an individual, to bring back a 90 day supply of Rx or OTC medication that is not available here
- Must be for personal use or that of an immediate family member
- Must be in original hospital or pharmacy packaging



## Immunizations for Seniors

- Influenza (Flu) Vaccine
  - Seniors aged 65 years or older, residents of nursing homes or care facilities, chronic medical conditions
  - High risk for flu-related complications (pneumonia)
  - Should be vaccinated annually
  - Cruise Ships!
- Covered by MSI



## Immunizations for Seniors

- Pneumococcal (Pneumonia) Vaccine
  - Lung (pneumonia)
  - Blood (septicemia)
  - Brain (meningitis)
  - Sinus (sinusitis)
  - Ear (otitis media)
- Seniors aged 65 and older, nursing home/LTC
- Heart or lung diseases, diabetes
- One injection per lifetime
- Covered by MSI



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## Preventative Medications

- Allergic Reactions
  - Epi Pen®, Benadryl®
- Diarrhea
  - Immodium®
- Motion Sickness
  - Gravol®
- Pain
  - Tylenol®
- Heat
  - Stay hydrated



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## Malaria



- Mosquito bite infects human with parasite
- Parasite enters blood stream
- Causes headaches, fever, chills
- Parts of Mexico, Dominican Republic, Central & South America, Asia, Africa
- Fatality rate is higher in seniors

## Malaria

- Avoid mosquitos
  - Dusk to dawn
  - Clothing
  - Repellants DEET up to 35%
- Preventative Medications – talk to your MD or PhC as soon as you know you are travelling
- Meds started before travel
- Fever 1 week up to 3 months upon return

## Hepatitis A

- Virus causes inflammation of the liver
- 40% cases come from travellers
- Weight loss, abdominal pain, nausea, vomiting, jaundice, dark urine, grey coloured stools
- Symptoms can last a few weeks to several months
- Most get sick then get better
- Seniors are at a greater risk to have severe symptoms

We know what Hepatitis A is....

then what is **Hepatitis B**??

.....Same symptoms, Can carry the virus indefinitely = higher risk of liver failure/cancer/death



## How can you get it?

- **Hep A** – fecal (poop) to oral transmission
  - Boil it, cook it, peel it, or forget it!
  - Avoid ice, drink bottled water
- **Hep B** – contaminated blood or bodily fluids transmission
  - Beware of unsterilized needles
  - Avoid tattooing, surgeries abroad

## A vaccine to prevent this....

.....Twinrix®

0, 1, 6 months  
0, 7, 21, 1 year



## Summary

- You can never bring too much documentation
- Speak to your MD/PhC as soon as you know you are travelling
- Always be over-prepared
- Get immunized for flu and pneumonia!
- Take precautions when travelling internationally

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### *Travel Agency*



**"It's a special casino for senior citizens.  
The slot machines pay off in prescription drugs."**

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## References

1. Public Health Agency of Canada
2. Centre for Disease Control
3. Saskatchewan College of Pharmacists
4. Travel.gc.ca Government of Canada
5. US Food and Drug Administration
6. US Customs and Border Protection