



National Prescribing Service Limited

MEDIA RELEASE

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Think about your medicines as you prepare for the holidays

Australians travelling over the Christmas break are urged to think about their medicines when preparing to go away, especially if they are going overseas.

CEO of the National Prescribing Service, Dr Lynn Weekes said forgetting to pack your medicines or not storing them properly can have serious consequences.

“There are three things to consider about your medicines when preparing to go away – do you have enough for the duration of your holiday or repeat prescriptions that can be filled, do your medicines need to be stored in special conditions while you’re travelling, and do you have the right documentation if you’re going overseas,” Dr Weekes said.

“Most medicines need to be stored under 25°C as exposure to heat and sunlight can cause chemical reactions in some medicines and reduce their effectiveness. If you’re going to be driving long distances or you’ll be somewhere without electricity (e.g. camping) ensure any medicines are kept cool in refrigerated bags.”

“If you are taking a friend or relative out of an aged care facility or hospital for leave over the holiday period check with the nursing staff that you have been given any medicines they may need and written instructions for dosages and timings. Ask for any special instructions such as avoiding particular foods that you may need to know as their carer.”

“If you’re going overseas make sure you’ve had the necessary immunisations and have enough of any medicines you take regularly for the time you’re away with a few days extra supply in case you get delayed,” Dr Weekes said.

When taking medicines out of Australia always keep your medicines in their original packaging and carry your prescriptions and a letter from your doctor explaining what the medicines are for. Some countries may not allow you past immigration without this documentation if you’re carrying medicines, especially if you have needles for injectible medicines.

“Crossing time zones can mess up daily medicine regimens so speak to your doctor or pharmacist before you leave about how you can manage the time differences,” Dr Weekes said.

For advice on how to store your medicines while travelling ask your pharmacist or visit www.nps.org.au/consumers/publications/medicines_talk/mt24/

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