



Zen Gaijin Travel Checklist for Diabetic Travelers to Japan

- ✓ Use this checklist to prepare for a safe, smooth trip to Japan with your diabetes medications and supplies.



Documentation & Legal Requirements

- ✓ Doctor's letter with diagnosis, medication list, and devices in English (and Japanese, if possible)
- ✓ Travel insurance that covers pre-existing conditions and medication-related delays
- ✓ If bringing **empty syringes** or **loose pen needles** (not part of a pre-filled pen), apply for Import Certificate (Yakkan Shoumei permit) in advance (**allow 2-3 weeks**)
- ✓ Check Japanese customs restrictions for your specific medications
- ✓ Emergency ID or medical alert bracelet



Medication & Supply Preparation

- ✓ Prescription labels clearly showing your name and dosage requirements.
- ✓ Enough medication and supplies for the full trip + extra days in case of delays
- ✓ Cooling case or FRIO pouch for insulin
- ✓ Pack snacks for flights and long train rides (glucose tablets, granola bars, nut mix, etc.)



Packing & Travel

- ✓ Keep insulin and medication in your carry-on, not checked luggage
- ✓ Use a cooling pouch (FRIO, ice packs with barrier) during long-haul flights
- ✓ Carry your doctor's letter and Import Certificate (Yakkan Shoumei), if required, in hand luggage
- ✓ Prime insulin pens after takeoff to remove air bubbles caused by cabin pressure
- ✓ Stay hydrated on long flights



While in Japan

- ✓ Store insulin in a refrigerator at your accommodation if needed
- ✓ Bring medications each day in a cooler case during summer months
- ✓ Carry a day-pack with snacks, water, and medication at all times
- ✓ Dispose of sharps responsibly—bring a travel sharps container or ask hotel staff
- ✓ Know how to find a nearby pharmacy—ask hotel staff for help or type "Yakkyoku" into Google Maps
- ✓ Convenience stores sell onigiri (rice triangles), eggs, yogurt, rice crackers and plain rice if you need predictable carb options



Technology & Devices

- ✓ Bring extra CGM sensors, test strips, charging cables, plug adapters and batteries
- ✓ Download glucose tracking apps that work offline
- ✓ Check time zone settings on CGMs or pump software to avoid alarms or data syncing issues
- ✓ Don't rely on cloud-only access in rural areas—download data in advance
- ✓ Know how to manually monitor and log readings if devices fail
- ✓ Japan has excellent cell coverage and portable Wi-Fi rental is widely available



Final Reminders

- ✓ Japan allows up to one month's worth of medication for personal use
- ✓ Apply for an import certificate for syringes or devices that are not part of a pre-filled medication
- ✓ *Japanese customs officials are professional and respectful. Having your documents ready helps ensure a smooth entry.*