



# Patients who wish to fly when pregnant

## Guidance - June 2019

**GPs in London and across the country have declared a #GPstateofemergency. To help GPs and their practice teams to manage the increasing workload, Londonwide LMCs has produced emergency guidance to manage requests for unresourced work and identify and communicate to patients activities that aren't covered by your core contract.**

Patients who are pregnant and wish to fly may present at practice asking for a letter from their GP to say they are fit to fly. The following information is intended to help you deal with such requests:

1. For most airlines patients do not need to see their GP if flying when less than 28 weeks pregnant (see appendix 1 for some of the main airlines' policies for expectant mothers).
2. Patients who are over 28 weeks but less than 37 weeks (32 weeks in the case of twin/multiple pregnancies) may need a GP letter (see appendix 2 for a standard letter that the practice can use).
3. All flights must be completed by week 37 of pregnancy (refer to appendix 1 for specific airline information).
4. It is advisable that pregnant patients know their blood type and ensure they have valid travel insurance and that the airline policy covers a newborn should delivery take place.
5. Pregnant patients should be advised to wear correctly fitted compression stockings whilst flying (NICE guidance):

“pregnant women should be informed that long-haul air travel is associated with an increased risk of venous thrombosis, although whether or not there is additional risk during pregnancy is unclear. In the general population, wearing correctly fitted compression stockings is effective at reducing the risk”.

6. Use the patient facing poster at the back of this guidance in your practice waiting room.
7. This is not NHS work so the practice may charge for any letter/certificate that is requested.



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### Appendix 1 - Some airlines' policies for expectant mothers (as of May 2019)

Please check individual airline policies at the time of request

Airline	Single Pregnancy	Multiple pregnancy
Air China	Women who are over 32 weeks and under 35 weeks pregnant, require a letter/certificate that is issued within seven days prior to departure.	Women who are over 32 weeks and under 35 weeks pregnant, require a letter/certificate that is issued within seven days prior to departure.
Air India	At time of booking women travelling between 32 weeks up to and including week 35 will require a letter/certificate. If more than one month elapses between the date the booking is effected and the departure, a further letter/certificate should be obtained, dated not more than three days prior to departure.	Cases of multiple and complicated pregnancy not accepted after week 32.
American Airlines	Within four weeks of due date, travel requires a letter/certificate stating that the patient has been examined prior to flying within the past 48 hours and they are fit to fly.	No apparent distinction between single or multiple pregnancies.
British Airways	Cannot fly after end of week 36. Letter/certification recommended.	Cannot fly after end of week 32. Letter/certification recommended.
EasyJet	Travel can be undertaken up until the end of week 35 and medical letter/certification is not required if there are no complications.	Travel can be undertaken up until the end of week 32 week and a letter/certificate is not required if there are no complications.
EI AI	A letter/certificate is required if travelling from the start of week 28. This must be dated up to 48 hours prior to date of departure and will be valid for the return flight provided return date does not exceed 36 weeks.	Website does not distinguish between single and multiple pregnancy.
Emirates	A letter/certificate is required if travelling between week 29 and the end of week 36.	A letter/certificate is required if travelling between week 29 and the end of week 36.





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Airline	Single Pregnancy	Multiple pregnancy
Flybe	A letter/certificate is required if flying 28 to 33 weeks and should be valid for three weeks from date of issue.	No apparent distinction between single and multiple pregnancy.
Jet2.com	Fit to fly letter/certificate required 28 – 35 weeks (inclusive). Travel not permitted 36 weeks onwards.	Fit to fly letter/certificate required 28 – 33 weeks (inclusive). Travel not permitted 34 weeks onwards.
Pakistan Airways	Letter/certificate for fitness to travel or special arrangements and ultrasound report required and can only fly up to week 27.	No distinction made between single and multiple pregnancy.
Qantas	Certification is required if travelling between week 28 and the end of week 36.	Certification is required if travelling between week 28 and end of week 32.
Air New Zealand	Can fly up to the end of week 36 with letter/certification.	Can fly up to the end of week 32 with letter/certification.
Ryanair	Fit to fly letter/certificate required if travelling between week 28 and the end of week 36.	Fit to fly letter/certificate required if travelling between week 28 and the end of week 32.
Singapore Air-lines	Letter/certification is required if flying between 29 and 36 weeks. Letter/certificate to be dated within 10 days of the first flight after week 28.	Letter/certification is required if flying between 29 and 32 weeks. Letter/certificate to be dated within 10 days of the first flight after week 28.
Tui	Letter/certification is required if flying between week 28 and the end of week 36.	Letter/certification required if flying between week 28 and the end of week 32.
Turkish Airlines	Letter/certification is required if travelling between week 28 and the end of week 35.	Letter/certification is required if travelling between week 28 and the end of week 31.
Virgin Atlantic	Letter/certificate is required if travelling between 28 and 36 weeks.	Letter/certificate is required if travelling between 28 and 32 weeks.

**With over 5,000 airlines worldwide we cannot list all the policies.**

**Please check, or advise patients to check, the airline's policy directly if it is not listed here.**

## **Appendix 2 – Template letter**

Dear Name

### **Flying during your pregnancy**

Your expected date of delivery is .....

You are currently ..... weeks pregnant.

You have informed me that you will fly on ..... and return on ..... I am content that you are fit to fly and will return to the UK before week xxxx based on the flight dates you have provided.

Yours sincerely

GP name



# FLYING WHEN PREGNANT

**For most airlines you do not need to see your GP if flying when less than 28 weeks pregnant. Check your airline's policy for further information.**

**If you are over 28 weeks but less than 37 weeks (32 weeks in the case of twin/multiple pregnancies) you may need a GP letter.**

**All flights must be completed by week 37 of your pregnancy.**

**You may be charged for any letter that the GP provides.**

**Please ask at reception for further information.**