



Your guide to Travelling to medical appointments

Travelling into the city for medical appointments - either from the suburbs or a more rural or regional area - can often be stressful, time-consuming, costly and difficult. Planning your journey, becoming familiar with different types of transport, and potential forms of assistance can make it easier.

This information sheet will provide the information, tips and tricks you need to get to your appointments safely and calmly - no matter what transport you use.

I'm travelling by car...

If you're travelling to your appointment by car - either as the driver or passenger - it's important to plan and be prepared.

Get comfortable in the car

If you're the driver, make sure you can reach and operate all of the controls, pedals, steering wheel etc. comfortably, and you have good visibility through your windows and mirrors.

Take breaks

Avoid driving for more than an hour without a break. Stop, get out of your car, and stretch or massage tight muscles. Build these breaks into your overall trip time so you have plenty of time to get from point A to point B safely and comfortably.

Know your route

Have a map or set your GPS to your destination. It's easy to get confused or take a wrong turn if you're anxious or worried about an appointment.

Be prepared for public works and road closures

Nothing can disrupt your trip and add to your stress like road work, especially when you weren't expecting them.

Allow extra time in your journey so that you don't feel rushed or stressed if you encounter public works and need to change your route. If you don't experience any delays, you can use the extra time before your appointment to grab a coffee, read a book or just relax.



You also need to be mindful of damage to our road networks caused by storms and floods. Before you head out, check the traffic websites in your state/territory for information about roadworks, road closures and other traffic alerts.

- ACT <https://www.cityservices.act.gov.au/roads-and-paths>
- NSW <https://www.livetraffic.com/>
- NT <https://roadreport.nt.gov.au/home>
- QLD <https://qldtraffic.qld.gov.au/>
- SA <https://traffic.sa.gov.au/>
- TAS https://www.transport.tas.gov.au/projectsplanning/road_closures_and_delays
- VIC <https://traffic.vicroads.vic.gov.au/>
- WA <https://www.mainroads.wa.gov.au/>

Tolls

Be aware of any tollways you may need to go on. If you have an electronic tag, the toll will automatically be added to your account. If you don't have a tag, you'll need to purchase a pass before you set out on your journey or pay soon after you use the tollway.

Parking

Is there parking at the medical centre or hospital you're going to? If you're not sure, call them before you leave. If there's parking available, is it free or do you have to pay a fee to use it? And if so, do you need coins, or can you pay with your debit/credit card?

I'm travelling by public transport...

When travelling by public transport, many factors, like cancellations and delays, are out of your control. So being proactive and prepared will give you some control over your trip.

Plan your trip

Your state/territory government website has tools to help you find the best way to get from point A to point B (and back).

- ACT <https://www.transport.act.gov.au/getting-around/journey-planner>
- NT <https://nt.gov.au/driving/public-transport-cycling/public-buses/journey-planner>
- NSW <https://transportnsw.info/trip#/trip>
- QLD <https://www.qld.gov.au/transport/public/transport/planner>
- SA <https://www.adelaidemetro.com.au/plan-a-trip/plan-my-journey>
- TAS <https://www.metrotas.com.au/planner/>
- VIC <https://www.ptv.vic.gov.au/>
- WA <https://www.wa.gov.au/service/transport/passenger-services/plan-journey-public-transport>

Simply enter the place you're departing from (e.g. Wodonga) and where you're going to (e.g. Royal Melbourne Hospital). You then choose the time you want to depart or arrive by and your journey date. You'll be given several journey options to choose from. It's a good idea to plan to arrive much earlier than your appointment so that if something does go wrong (*a cancelled train or you get a little lost 😊*), you have time up your sleeve. You won't be rushing or worrying about running late.

Mobility aids

The experience of travelling with mobility aids will vary between trains, trams, cabs, ferries, buses and coaches, as each form of transport is different. It will also depend on the mobility aid – scooter, wheelchair, walker, crutches etc. - as they can vary significantly in size and space required to safely transport them. Before starting your journey, contact the relevant operator and tell them you use a mobility aid. This allows you to provide them with the details of your mobility aid and ask any questions.



I need help to get to my appointment...

Sometimes travelling by car or public transport isn't an option, or you may need extra help.

Community transport

Community transport services are run by not-for-profit organisations and some local councils. The service is often operated by volunteers who take people to medical appointments, shopping centres and social outings if they can't use other transport. Eligibility requirements and costs vary from place to place and with different operators. Search online for 'community transport' or contact your local council to find out about options in your area.

Subsidised taxi fares

All states and territories have subsidised taxi schemes for people with disability and health issues. They all vary in the concessions offered and eligibility criteria. Contact your relevant government department to determine your eligibility for this scheme.

- ACT <https://www.revenue.act.gov.au/community-assistance/taxi-subsidy-scheme>
- NSW <https://www.service.nsw.gov.au/transaction/apply-for-the-taxi-transport-subsidy-scheme>
- NT <https://nt.gov.au/driving/public-transport-cycling/help-getting-around/transport-subsidy-and-incentive-schemes>
- QLD <https://www.qld.gov.au/disability/out-and-about/subsidies-concessions-passes/taxi-subsidy>
- SA <https://www.sa.gov.au/topics/driving-and-transport/disability/taxi-fare-subsidy-scheme>
- TAS <https://www.concessions.tas.gov.au/concessions/transport>
- VIC <https://cpv.vic.gov.au/passengers/mptp>
- WA <https://www.transport.wa.gov.au/On-demandTransport/travel-subsidies.asp>

Patient transport assistance schemes

If you need financial support with travel and/or accommodation to receive your medical treatment or care because the services are unavailable locally, patient travel assistance schemes may be an option. These services are generally available for people who travel large distances or interstate to access necessary health care. Again, they vary in the support provided and eligibility criteria.

- ACT <https://www.canberrahealthservices.act.gov.au/before,-during-and-after-your-care/staying-at-canberra-hospital/before-you-arrive/getting-here-and-getting-around/travelling-from-outside-canberra>
- NSW <https://www.iptaas.health.nsw.gov.au/>
- NT <https://nt.gov.au/wellbeing/health-subsidies-support-and-home-visits/patient-assistance-travel-scheme>
- QLD <https://www.qld.gov.au/health/services/travel/subsidies>
- SA <https://www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/wps/wcm/connect/public+content/sa+health+internet/services/regional+health+services/patient+assistance+transport+scheme/patient+assistance+transport+scheme>
- TAS <https://www.health.tas.gov.au/patients/support-services-your-visit-hospital/travel-support-ptas>
- VIC <https://www.health.vic.gov.au/rural-health/victorian-patient-transport-assistance-scheme-vptas>
- WA <https://www.wacountry.health.wa.gov.au/Our-patients/Patient-Assisted-Travel-Scheme-PATS/PATS-subsidies>

Red Cross Patient Transport Service

If public transport isn't an option for you, the Red Cross operates a [transport service](#) for medical appointments. Cars are driven by volunteers, not medical staff, so you may need a carer if you're unwell.



Angel Flight Australia

This volunteer-run charity operates non-emergency flights to help rural and remote Australians get to medical appointments in other parts of the country. All flights are free, and people are transported to medical facilities across Australia. [Find out more.](#)

Where can I get more help?

Many people and support organisations can help you manage your musculoskeletal condition. They include:

- your doctor
- Musculoskeletal Australia | msk.org.au | National Arthritis and Back Pain+ Help Line: 1800 263 265

How can Musculoskeletal Australia help?

Our nurses are available for you to speak with about arthritis and other musculoskeletal conditions, pain or any other musculoskeletal issues you have. You can contact them on weekdays between 9am-5pm. Phone 1800 263 265 or email helpline@msk.org.au. We also have a range of services – including free webinars – you can access on our [website](#).

More to explore

- [Transport and travel](#)
Carer Gateway
- [Travel for treatment](#)
Department of Veterans' Affairs
- [Travelling to your healthcare appointment](#)
healthdirect

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