



# Tips for Flying with a Wheelchair

## Packing

- In addition to a checked bag, if you are bringing one, pack a small carry-on and be sure to include:
  - Medication
  - Identification
  - Enough urological/daily use supplies to last two days
- Consider bringing a small, empty duffel bag to contain any parts or cushions from your chair before it is loaded onto the plane.
- If you have specific directions about how airline staff should handle your chair, print out directions and tape them to the chair.

## Parking

- Research and find a satellite “park and ride” parking lot for greater ease. Oftentimes airport lots can be overcrowded and difficult to get handicap parking spaces.
- Arrive an extra 30 minutes early on top of the recommended two hours prior to scheduled departure.

## Check-In

- Let the counter agent know you are traveling with your own personal wheelchair (while this may seem obvious, this isn't always the case).
- Request assistance for boarding the aircraft.

## Security

- Consolidate all loose items into a carry-on bag.
- Be prepared for a more involved TSA security check.
  - You will be assigned a TSA agent of the same sex and given the option of a private or semi-private check.
  - Your chair will be examined as you remain seated, be prepared for your entire body to be inspected using the back side of the TSA agent's hand.
  - After the pat down has occurred, dry swabs of your chair and hands will be taken and tested.

## Gate

- Restate your needs with the gate agent and ask that your wheelchair be tagged for retrieval at your arrival gate.
- Use the restroom before boarding. Remember that those needing special assistance board first.



## Boarding

- Prepare for transfer to a small aisle chair to get to your seat. The aisle chair is extremely narrow and is not as comfortable or stable as your personal wheelchair. You will usually be boarded 30 minutes prior to scheduled departure.
- If you are uncomfortable when being transferred, say something. Remember that communication is key.
- Remove seat cushions, backpacks and removable side guards from manual chairs to bring inside the cabin. Seat cushions, headrests, lateral and thigh supports and anything fragile and easily removable without tools should be removed from power wheelchairs.
  - Pack these in your small, empty duffel bag to contain these items and prevent them from being lost.
- Relay any specific directions for how you would like your chair to be handled to the airline staff.
- Consider bringing your wheelchair cushion onto the plane to make the airplane seat more comfortable.

## Arriving at your destination

- If you have a time sensitive connecting flight, remind the flight attendant of your timeline and ask if there is anything that can be done to ensure a speedy transition.
- Be careful pushing up the jetway when leaving, added weight in your carry-on and the steep angle of the jetway ramp can make for a tippy wheelchair.
- If you do not see your luggage at the correct area, check the luggage office as luggage gets moved after a certain amount of time.
- Carefully inspect your chair for possible damage acquired in transit.
  - If damage has occurred notify airline personnel, and contact the Numotion Customer Care Center toll-free at 800-500-9150. With over 130 locations nationwide, we may very well have a location near your destination and would be happy to assist.