

REFERENCE CHARTS

Fit to fly?

Dr Goolam Kamathia outlines the conditions that might affect a patient's fitness to travel by air

Condition		Fit to fly	Source: International Air Travel Association manual
Cardiovascular	Angina	If stable and no symptoms at rest	
	Myocardial infarction	After 10 days if no complications	
	Heart failure	If stable and the patient can walk 50m or a flight of stairs without breathlessness	
	Pulmonary embolus	After five days if anticoagulation stable and PAO ₂ normal on room air	
	Lower limb DVT	Once asymptomatic and stable on anticoagulants	
	Previous DVT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Individual assessment required but there is a high risk of further DVT and PE ● Consider low molecular weight heparin and compression stockings 	
Respiratory	Pneumothorax	Seven days after full inflation, 14 days after inflation for traumatic pneumothorax	
	COPD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● If exercise tolerance is more than 50m without breathing difficulties and general condition is adequate ● No current infection ● Full recovery after a recent exacerbation 	
	Asthma	Currently asymptomatic and no infection	
	Pneumonia	Once fully resolved	
Neurological	TIA	After two days and proper investigation	
	Stroke	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● After five to 14 days if stable or improving, with nurse escort (not required if an uncomplicated recovery has been made) ● If travelling in the first two weeks after stroke will require supplementary oxygen 	
	Fit (grand mal)	After 24 hours if generally well controlled	
Surgical	Abdominal surgery (laparotomy)	After 10 days if uncomplicated recovery	
	Abdominal surgery (laparoscopy)	After five days if uncomplicated recovery	
	Appendicectomy	After five days if uncomplicated recovery	
ENT	Otitis media and sinusitis	Once infection has resolved and able to clear ears	
	Middle ear surgery	After 10 days with certificate from surgeon. Excludes stapedectomy	
	Tonsillectomy	After 10 days	
Other	Anaemia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● If greater than 9.5g/dl ● In acute anaemia assess haemoglobin 24 hours after last blood loss, which must have ceased 	
	Plaster cast	After 48 hours for flights over two hours, 24 hours for shorter flights	
	Pregnancy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● In uncomplicated pregnancies certificate required after 28 weeks ● Flying not recommended after 36 weeks for single pregnancy and 32 weeks for multiple pregnancy 	
	Miscarriage (threatened or complete)	Once stable, no bleeding or pain for at least 24 hours	



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Dr Goolam Kamathia is a GP and aeromedical examiner in Gloucestershire