



# TIPS ON TRIPS



## Snowbirds: Precautions Prevent Medication Errors When Traveling During The Winter

(NAPSA)—Each year, millions of “snowbirds”—seniors and baby boomers who travel to warmer regions during the cold winter months—pack up to head off for the winter. However, they should take precautions to prevent medication errors when transferring care to their “seasonal” clinicians—the doctors and pharmacists that will assume their care during the winter.

“It’s challenging enough for one physician and one pharmacy to manage the medication regimen of the average senior,” said Dr. Glen Stettin, vice president of clinical products, Medco Health Solutions, Inc., the nation’s leading pharmacy benefits manager. “However, because these seasonal travelers are transferring care to different doctors and pharmacists, it’s important to take special steps to ensure that any clinician they see is updated.”

Dr. Stettin offers the following tips to help seasonal travelers prevent potential medication errors or complications:

- **Make and take a medication list**—Keep an updated list of all prescription and over-the-counter medications with you at all times. Include the medication, strength and condition you’re taking it for.

- **Get your meds mailed to you**—Three-month supplies of medications for chronic conditions can be filled through your pharmacy plan’s home delivery pharmacy and sent directly to your winter home, eliminating the need to switch pharmacies.

- **Ask for refills or renewals before you leave**—See your doctor for a check-up before you leave and ask that your prescriptions be updated with renewals if necessary. Refill your prescriptions before you leave to make sure you



**For seniors who travel, it’s important to make sure that prescription medication is accounted for.**

have a full supply.

- **Have contact numbers handy**—Always carry a list of phone numbers for all of your doctors and your home pharmacy, in case an emergency arises.

- **Use original containers**—Carry your medications in original containers with original labels. Also, keep a copy of the prescriptions with you for emergency refills.

- **Keep your medications close**—When flying, always carry your medications with you instead of packing them in a suitcase.

- **Avoid extreme temperatures**—In automobiles, do not store medications in the trunk or glove compartment where temperatures may become very hot or very cold. Also, do not place medications on the dashboard or back window, where they may be exposed to direct sunlight.

- **Think kid-safe**—If you are visiting a place where children will be present, keep all medications out of their reach or in a locked suitcase. Make sure a child’s parent is aware of where the medications are being stored.