

Autism Travelling through the airport

Information for carers



Travelling through the airport

For people with autism, flying can be a special experience.



The project “Autism, travelling through the airport” devised by ENAC [the Italian Civil Aviation Authority] with the collaboration of industry associations and airport management companies, provides recommendations and suggestions for carers to help autistic children and adults to travel calmly.

To provide appropriate, personalised assistance and to meet the needs of individual people with autism, ADR Assistance supports families and/or carers during the preparation stage or preliminary stages of air travel.

Before departure

YOU MUST

Request dedicated assistance at the time of booking or purchasing your air ticket and, in any case, at least 48 hours before departure, from the airline, travel agent or tour operator, who are obliged to forward your request to the airport managers at the departure, arrival and any transit airports.

It is important to indicate the specific needs of the autistic person. You are advised to prepare autistic person in advance to face their journey calmly.



Before departure

YOU ARE ADVISED TO:

- **Explain** to the passenger the time you will get to the airport, playing down the impact with the foreign context, which can be noisy and crowded.
- **Show** them, if possible, images or films (available on the internet) of the airport infrastructure and environments.
- **Reassure** them of the presence of friendly people capable of providing help, as well as protected, quiet lounges and easily accessible toilets.

Arrival at the airport



- **Reassure** the passenger of the fact that they can access pleasant areas of the airport: bars, restaurants, shops selling books, magazines, games and gadgets.
- **Explain**, in a positive way, the presence of signs, luminous symbols and sudden voice messages.
- **Prepare** them for take-off noises, explaining that they are a characteristic part of the journey and, as is the bus journey or walk over loading bridge (the approach tunnel) for boarding the aircraft.

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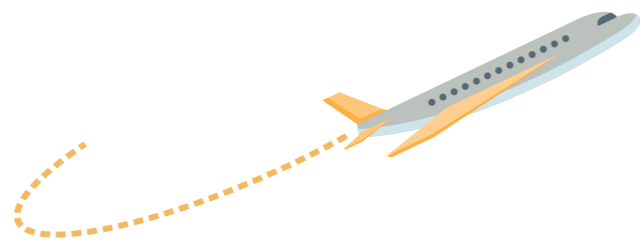
- Once at the airport, go to the Departure Terminal.
- Tell the passenger about the security gates, of the possibility of sudden alarms and a possible search.
- Try to play this down by describing it like a game.
- Create a badge for the autistic person with his/her details: photograph, name, surname, nationality, contact details of family members and of the carer.

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Before boarding

You must tell the airline in advance if the autistic person has to follow a special diet, if they have food intolerance or specific allergies. If liked, it helps to offer the autistic person sweets or chewing gum to help them overcome any air pressure issues during the flight.

At the family's request, with the support of ADR Assistance staff, it is possible to plan a familiarisation visit to the airport, also providing for the presence of an educator assistant.



Useful information

On the website

www.adr.it

there is a series of images to show autistic people in advance of the departure and arrival routes at the airport. For any other information and for any visits to the airport prior to the scheduled journey, please contact ADR Assistance by sending an email to:

progettoautismo@adrassistance.it



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In partnership with:
Fondazione Italiana per l'Autismo Onlus {Italian Autism Foundation NPO}
Federazione Fantasia Onlus {Fantasia Federation NPO}
Aeroporti di Roma