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## Are Pulmonologists Well Aware of Planning Safe Air Travel for Patients with COPD? The SAFCOP Study

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**Objectives:** Air travel is one of the most preferred options for travelling. Respiratory illnesses comprise approximately 12% of all in-flight emergencies; therefore, it is crucial to inform and assess individuals who have high risk. However, awareness and practices for fitness to fly amongst physicians and countries differ widely. The aim of this study is to investigate the current knowledge and attitudes of Turkish pulmonologists for air travel in COPD.

**Methods:** A questionnaire was administered to understand the level of knowledge and current practice of pulmonologists for air travel in patients with COPD. The study was supported by Turkish Thoracic Society (TTS). In the first step, the questionnaire was adapted to mobile phone application of TTS 2018 Congress and participants were invited and asked to fill the questionnaire. In the second step, an invitation for the questionnaire was sent to pulmonologists by electronic mail.

**Results:** A total of 242 pulmonologists participated in the study. Preflight assessment was reported to be performed by 61.6% of participants and fit to fly report was prepared by 34.3% of them. The most common assessment methods/tests used for preflight evaluation were reported as pulse oxygen saturation, patient's general health status and pulmonary function tests. The participants were also asked to plan air travel in two different clinical scenarios. The rate of correct answer was 19.8% in both scenarios. Only 7.8% answered correctly to both questions.

**Conclusion:** Our results suggest that special attention should be paid for not only informing patients but also educating healthcare professionals for air travel in COPD.

**Keywords:** COPD, air travel, fit to fly