

Wherever you travel, however you travel, mind how you go : avoiding the risks of HIV for travellers : Travel Safe, advice from the Department of Health.

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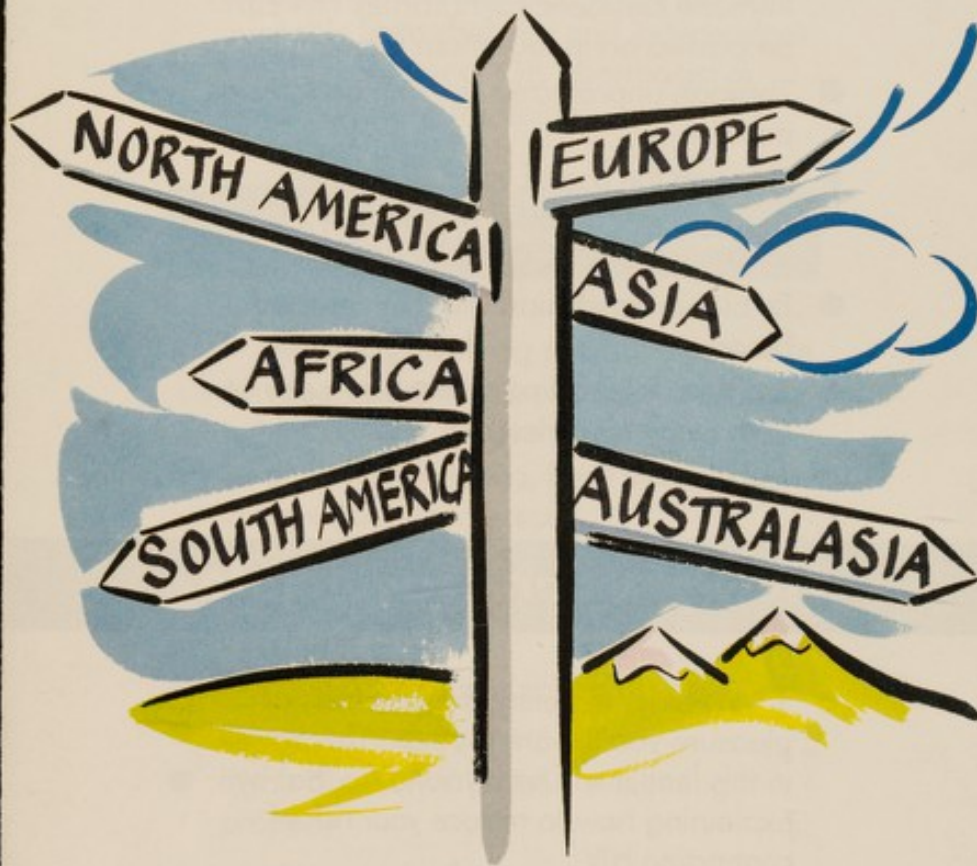
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**Wherever you travel.
However you travel.
Mind how you go.**



Avoiding the risks of HIV
for travellers.



Travel Safe

Advice from the Department of Health.

What is HIV and what's it got to do with AIDS?

HIV (Human Immuno-deficiency Virus) is the virus that causes AIDS (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome). HIV can be passed on in four main ways:

- Through unprotected sex with an infected person.
- Through the use of infected needles, syringes and medical and dental instruments.
- By blood transfusion with HIV infected blood.
- From an infected mother to her baby at birth or by breastfeeding.

How you can Travel Safe.

Whether travelling for business or pleasure you'll want to relax. The advice in this leaflet will help you to do that by explaining how to reduce your risk of contracting HIV.

- Read the leaflet
- Carry the Travel Safe Code card
- Enjoy yourself
- Stay healthy



Sex and the traveller.

HIV doesn't only affect gay men and drug users. Worldwide, the virus is most commonly transmitted through sex between men and women. When you're away from home and feeling more relaxed, particularly after a few drinks, there's a chance that you might become less cautious about having sex with someone new. If you do have sex with someone other than your usual partner ALWAYS use a condom.

Condoms are the most effective protection against HIV and other sexually transmitted diseases. In some parts of the world many prostitutes are infected, so having sex with a prostitute is particularly risky.

- Pack an adequate supply of condoms carrying the British Standard Kitemark.
- If buying condoms abroad only buy good quality ones.
- Know how to use condoms properly.
- ALWAYS use a condom with a new partner and each time you have sex with them.



Carry the card and follow the Code.

The TravelSafe Code

HIV, the virus that causes AIDS, is worldwide. When abroad you can reduce your risk if you follow the Travel Safe Code:

- **Avoid unnecessary medical or dental treatment and situations which may make this necessary.**
- **If you have sex with someone new, always use a condom.**
- **Don't inject drugs or share needles and syringes.**
- **Remember alcohol and drugs affect your judgement.**
- **Avoid having a tattoo, acupuncture or your ears pierced unless sterile equipment is used.**



Have a good journey.

Travel Safe

Travel the world HIVSafe

And travel the world HIV safe.

Accidents abroad.

Overseas travel may increase your general risk of an accident so take particular care:

- Don't drink and drive.
- Check that hire cars and motorbikes are in good condition.
- Remember that road conditions and driving standards may be unfamiliar.
- Always wear a seatbelt or a crash helmet and place children in a child restraint.



If you take part in dangerous sports and pastimes take extra care, safety standards may not be as high as those you are used to at home.

Medical care abroad.

Some countries do not have the same standards of medical and dental care that you are used to in the UK. Needles and other equipment may not be adequately sterilised. Blood for transfusion is not always screened for the presence of HIV or Hepatitis B. So:

- Try to ensure that any medical treatment, particularly blood transfusion, is absolutely necessary.
- Make sure that any medical equipment used is freshly sterilised or is taken from a sealed pack.
- If you need a blood transfusion, ask for screened blood.

Carrying a medical kit.

It is sensible to carry a basic first aid kit with you but you may want to take a special medical kit containing sterile equipment for use in an emergency. These kits are available from chemists and independent suppliers. Ask your GP, pharmacist or travel company for details.

Other risks to avoid.

Anything involving puncturing the skin carries a risk as the equipment used may not be sterile.

- So don't have a tattoo, have acupuncture or have your ears pierced.

Sharing needles and syringes is a major cause of the spread of HIV infection:

- Don't inject non-prescribed drugs.
- Don't share equipment.
- If you do, ALWAYS clean everything properly.

What doesn't give you HIV.

HIV cannot be spread through everyday social contact. It can't be passed on through:

- Kissing
- Dirty crockery or food
- Swimming pools
- Insect bites
- Toilet seats
- Coughing or sneezing



Behave sensibly, as you would at home, and you won't put yourself at any extra risk.

Further advice for travellers.

- Talk to your doctor about vaccinations and anti-malarial treatment.
- If you haven't had a recent check up go and see your dentist before you go.
- Check your medical, personal and motor insurance.
- Pack an adequate sun screen
- Make sure you take all your documents e.g. tickets, passport, driver's licence, insurance and vaccination certificates.



Health advice for travellers and other HIV and AIDS leaflets are published by the Department of Health and the Health Education Authority and can be obtained by calling the Health Literature Line on 0800 555 777.

The Terrence Higgins Trust Helpline (12 noon - 10 pm 071-242 1010) provides advice and counselling on HIV/AIDS issues.

MASTA (Medical Advisory Service for Travellers Abroad, based at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, Keppel St, London WC1E 7HT. Tel: 071-631 4408) can give advice on travel abroad.

Calls to **The National AIDS Helpline** on 0800 567 123 are free and it operates 24 hours a day. It cannot be reached from abroad.

To order an additional copy of this leaflet just phone the **Health Literature Line** on 0800 555 777 any time, free of charge.

Bulk copies (more than 10) must be ordered from: BAPS, Health Distribution Unit, DSS Distribution Centre, Heywood Stores, Manchester Road, Heywood, Lancs. OL10 2PZ