

major surgery after a single shot. It's related to PCP, but without all the freaky side effects and violence. (Note from *DP*: Although it seems highly altruistic, don't hand out medicines to the locals. Within minutes, the entire village will have a headache and will be lined up outside your tent. If you want to leave medicine for the locals, give it to a doctor or health worker who understands the uses and dangers of your gift.)

<http://www.drugs.com>
<http://www.baproducts.com/fak.htm>
<http://www.equipped.com/medical.htm>

has only been found in monkeys sent by a Philippine supplier. All monkeys exposed to the virus were destroyed, and officials from the Centers for Disease Control reassured the public that Ebola Reston is a different virus from Ebola Zaire (the country is now called the Democratic Republic of the Congo). Ebola Zaire is the strain that killed 244 people in one outbreak. Still, experts warn that the Ebola Reston strain could mutate into a strain that is fatal to humans. The outbreak of plague in India also has travelers a little edgy about the whole concept of adventurous travel. There are real dangers in every part of the world, and the more knowledgeable you are about them, the better your chances for surviving.

Sex (STDs)

The quest for sexual adventure was once a major part of the joy of travel. Today, the full range of sexual diseases available to the common traveler would fill an encyclopedia. Diseases like HIV, hepatitis A and B, the clap, syphilis, genital warts, herpes, crabs, lice, and others that Westerners blame on the third world, and the third world blames on the West, are very preventable and require parking your libido.

Despite the continual global publicity on the dangers of AIDS, it continues to claim victims at an alarming rate. Of the 34 most affected AIDS countries, 29 are in Africa, where life expectancy has been reduced by an average of 7 years. Yet whorehouses around the world are thriving, junkies still share needles, and dentists in many third-world countries still grind and yank away with improperly sterilized instruments. Other sexually transmitted diseases are also a growing health hazard. According to WHO, 236 million people have trichomoniasis and 94 million new cases occur each year. Chlamydial infections affect 162 million people, with 97 million new cases annually. And these

ures don't include the increasing millions with genital warts, gonorrhea, genital herpes, and syphilis. The highest rates for sexually transmitted diseases are in the 20 to 24 age group.

How do you avoid sexually transmitted diseases? Well, keeping your romantic agenda on the platonic side is a good start. The use of condoms is the next best thing. Realistically, the chances of catching AIDS through unprotected sex depends on frequency and type of contact. People infected by blood transfusions, prostitutes, frequent drug users, hemophiliacs, homosexuals, and the millions of people who will get HIV this year from heterosexual sex will continue to make HIV a growing danger.

Hepatitis A, B, C

Your chance of getting hepatitis B if you leave the United States is only 5 percent, unless of course you go for a tattoo at the smack-jabbers' rusty-needle convention in the Golden Triangle (and have unprotected sex afterward with a Thai junkie hooker). All macho bullshit aside, men and women are at equal risk and health workers are at a very high risk for contracting hepatitis B when working in third-world countries. Carrier rates in some undeveloped countries are as high as 20 percent of the total population. Many travelers get hep B without engaging in any high-risk activities because the virus can survive outside the body for prolonged periods. Infection can occur when any infected material comes in contact with mucous membranes or broken skin. The vaccine for hepatitis B is 90 percent effective after three doses. See your doctor or a local health clinic for more information before you travel.

Hepatitis A is a viral infection of the liver transmitted by the fecal, oral route through direct contact with infected people, from water, ice, shellfish, or uncooked food. Symptoms for hep A include fever, loss of appetite, dark urine, jaundice, vomiting, aches and pains, and light stools. You usually get hep A in third-world countries with poor sanitation. It is easy to prevent with a simple vaccination using one of the two vaccines available. For proper protection, the vaccine requires an initial shot (good for three months) and then repeated doses to protect in the long run.

About hep B: *DP* fan and reader Dr. Susan Hou sent us a polite but firm letter demanding that we expand information on this very easy-

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