

yellow fever, typhoid, meningitis, Japanese encephalitis, hepatitis or malaria. For instance, a meningo-coccal vaccination is required for pilgrims travelling to Mecca, Saudi Arabia, for the annual hajj; and an International Certificate of Vaccination for yellow fever is a legal requirement to enter certain countries.

You may need to start receiving your vaccination shots or taking medication **six to eight weeks before you leave**. Also ensure that your routine immunizations — diphtheria, whooping cough (pertussis), tetanus, polio, measles, mumps and rubella — are up-to-date. Other immunization requirements will vary according to your age, existing medical conditions and the nature and duration of your time abroad.

If you are travelling with infants or small children, you may need to arrange an alternative or accelerated childhood immunization schedule for them. Talk to your pediatrician, family doctor or travel medicine clinic.

AIDS

AIDS/HIV is a global disease. Some countries require proof of AIDS testing. Have the test conducted and obtain the results **before you leave**. Call Health Canada to find out if the country

where you plan to work requires this documentation. When you are overseas, take the same precautions you do at home. Do not assume that condoms will be readily available. Even if they are, they may not meet the safety standards set by the World Health Organization.

Remember: Using intravenous drugs is not only illegal but is also extremely risky — especially if you share needles.

Medication

If you take medication, be sure to pack an extra supply or make arrangements for resupply in case you are away for longer than expected. Having a duplicate of your original prescription is highly recommended. Also, have an extra prescription that lists both the generic and the trade names of any drug you are taking, in case your medication is lost or stolen. This is also a good idea if you wear glasses or contact lenses — having the prescription makes it easier to replace them.

Do not try to save luggage space by combining medications into a single container. Keep all medications in the original, labelled container to avoid problems.

Find out whether your medication is sold in the country in which you will be working. Also check to see