

Start your vaccination shots at least three months before you leave. In some cases, you may need several inoculations, with waiting periods between each injection.

Make sure that your routine immunizations are up to date. If you were not exposed to certain diseases as a child, or were not immunized, you could be at an increased risk of contracting diseases such as tetanus or diphtheria.

If infants or small children are accompanying you, you may need to arrange an alternate 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 recent AIDS testing as an entry requirement. Have the test conducted and obtain the results before you travel. Call Health Canada at (613) 957-8739 to find out if the country in which you will be working requires documentation.

When you are overseas, take all 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 extremely risky.

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 that it is legal. Some over-the-counter medications in Canada are illegal in other countries or