



# I am traveling to a country that has a high rate of hepatitis C. How can I protect myself?

July 23, 2019 By [Lucinda K. Porter RN](#)

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Hepatitis C virus (HCV) is transmitted when the blood of an infected person passes into the blood of an uninfected person. So take care to avoid coming in to direct contact with anything that may have blood on it, even if you can't see the blood.

The most common way that HCV is spread is by sharing needles and other equipment used to inject drugs. Non-injection drug use can be risky when sharing pipes and straws. HCV transmission through sexual activity is rare, except with unprotected sex among men who have sex with men. Practicing safer sex using a protective barrier (e.g., condoms and gloves) can reduce the risk of acquiring HCV as well as HIV and other sexually transmitted infections. Think twice before getting a tattoo or body piercing unless you feel 100% confident of the hygienic practices of the artist. The same is true for manicures, acupuncture, dental procedures etc. Do not share toothbrushes or razors or any other personal care items that could be exposed to blood.

July 28 is World Hepatitis Day and a good opportunity to increase awareness about viral hepatitis. [Click here](#) to learn more and get involved. This [link provides more information](#) about viral hepatitis including how to protect yourself.

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<http://beta.docker.hepmag.com/article/traveling-country-high-rate-hepatitis-c-can-protect>