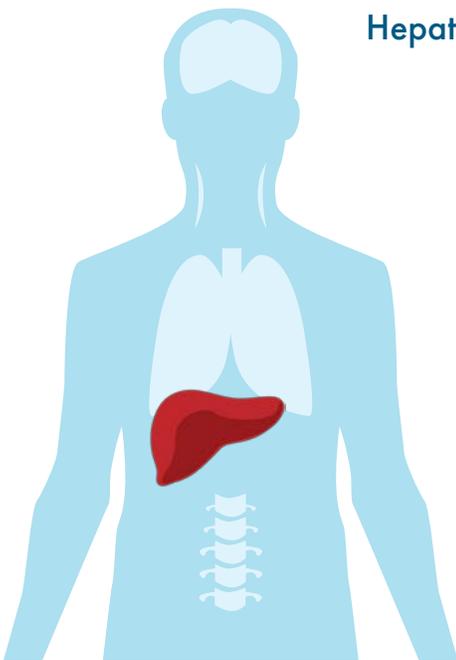




## Travel Guard® Health Advisory HEPATITIS

In April 2017, the World Health Organization (WHO) revealed that an estimated 325 million people worldwide are living with chronic hepatitis B virus (HBV) or hepatitis C virus (HCV) infection. <sup>1</sup> This data indicates that many people lack access to life-saving hepatitis testing and treatment. As a result, millions of people are at risk of chronic liver disease, cancer and death. The following are some additional statistics regarding hepatitis:

- Viral hepatitis caused 1.34 million deaths in 2015.
- Approximately 1.75 million people were newly infected with HCV in 2015, bringing the global total of people living with hepatitis C to 71 million.
- New infections of HBV are falling with the increased access to HBV vaccination among children. Globally, 84% of children born in 2015 received the three recommended doses of hepatitis B vaccine. The proportion of children under 5 years of age with new infections fell from 4.7% to 1.3% over the last two decades. However, an estimated 257 million people (mostly adults born before the introduction of the HBV vaccine) were living with chronic hepatitis B infection in 2015. <sup>2</sup>



### Hepatitis viruses are the most common cause of hepatitis in the world.

Hepatitis is an inflammation of the liver.

There are five main hepatitis viruses, referred to as types A, B, C, D and E.

Hepatitis B and C lead to chronic disease. Together, they are the most common cause of liver cirrhosis (scarring of the liver) and cancer, and are responsible for 96% of overall hepatitis mortality.

Hepatitis A and E are typically caused by ingestion of contaminated food or water. Hepatitis B, C and D usually occur as a result of contact with infected body fluids.

The most common modes of transmission for these viruses include the transmission of contaminated blood or blood products and invasive medical procedures using contaminated equipment. Regarding hepatitis B, transmission most commonly occurs from mother to baby at birth and through sexual contact.

Acute infection may occur with limited or no symptoms, or may include symptoms such as jaundice (yellowing of the skin and eyes), dark urine, extreme fatigue, nausea, vomiting and abdominal pain.

## Diagnosis and Treatment

In addition to a physical examination and diagnostic procedures to determine the extent of the disease, blood testing, ultrasounds and a liver biopsy may be required by your doctor.

The goal of these treatments is to provide symptomatic relief and prevention of further liver damage. Non-specific treatment may include a healthy diet and rest, medications to help control itching and avoiding drugs and alcohol.

- Hepatitis A – There is no treatment for Hepatitis A. The vast majority of patients with Hepatitis A will recover spontaneously.
- Hepatitis B – Acute Hepatitis B usually resolves with or without treatment. Patients with chronic Hepatitis B require medical treatment.
- Hepatitis C – Treatment for Hepatitis C is dependent on the genotype.<sup>3</sup>
- Hepatitis D and E – There are no effective treatments for Hepatitis D and E.

## Prevention Recommendations

- Learn about the type of hepatitis that is prevalent in the region / country of destination and get vaccinated prior to travelling.
- Wash hands often with antimicrobial soap and water, especially after using the bathroom and before preparing or eating food.
- Consume safe food and beverages.

- Blood transfusions should be screened.
- Medical equipment should be sterilized.
- Practice safe sex.
- Vaccinations and post exposure procedures should be taken for Hepatitis A and B.
- Harm reduction for injection drug users.
- Avoid sharing needles, including needles for tattoos, piercings and acupuncture. If necessary, needles and equipment that are used should always be sterilized.

## About AIG Travel and Travel Guard®

AIG Travel has eight strategically located assistance centres worldwide, and all medical cases are monitored and managed from one central online system. Customers are never more than a phone call away from AIG Travel's multi-lingual and multi-cultural 24/7 assistance and medical professionals.

AIG Travel, Inc., a member of American International Group, Inc., is a worldwide leader in travel insurance and global assistance. Travel Guard® is the marketing name for its portfolio of travel insurance and travel-related services, including medical and security services, marketed to both leisure and business travellers around the globe. Services are provided through a network of wholly owned service centres located in Asia, Europe and the Americas. For additional information, please visit our websites at [www.aig.com/travel](http://www.aig.com/travel) and [www.travelguard.com](http://www.travelguard.com).

### Sources:

- 1 <http://www.who.int/hepatitis/en/>
- 2 <http://www.who.int/mediacentre/news/releases/2017/global-hepatitis-report/en/>
- 3 <http://hepc.liverfoundation.org/treatment/the-basics-about-hepatitis-c-treatment/medication-regimens-according-to-genotype/>

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