

ANNALS of Internal Medicine

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Typescript: M88-2182
First Author: Von Reyn
Date Review Due: FEB 10 1989

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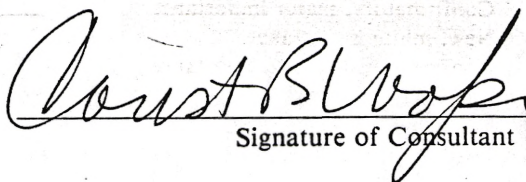
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COMMENTS FOR EDITOR

This is a well-written paper discussing important issues for international travel authored by individuals who logically speak the final word on global policies and provide recommendations from the World Health Organization. Several sections, particularly on prophylactic treatment, immunizations, and arguments against screening international travelers are particularly good. A major concern about the document as written, however, is a not-so-subtle Chamber of Commerce type of reassurance regarding the risk of HIV from unscreened blood, particularly in Africa. The extraordinary glossing over of the issue seems intentional and is likely motivated by strong African political pressures. While these pressures are understandable, any publication in a scientific journal of the caliber of the Annals of Internal Medicine must demand accurate scientific and epidemiologic information and must assume that its readers are extremely well-informed, intellectually curious, and deserving of truthful information. Likewise, the authors combine perspectives on prostitution in the Western world and underdeveloped countries without focusing on special issues for Asian or African travelers.

The manuscript deserves publishing in the Annals of Internal Medicine but only if the issue of the blood supply is given the same kind of realistic attention as some of the other topics.


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Typescript: M88-2182

First Author: Von Reyn

On this sheet (and additional sheets, if necessary) give specific comments, as appropriate, on adequacy of study design and methods, validity of conclusions, and relevancy of discussion. Other kinds of comments may be relevant to some types of papers (reviews or editorials, for example). Include comments on style and presentation; length of text; and number, quality, and importance of figures and tables.

Group your main points under the heading **Major Comments**. Give further suggestions under the heading **Additional Comments**. Number your paragraphs and indicate page, paragraph, and line of manuscript text as appropriate.

MAJOR COMMENTS

The manuscript is well-written, easy to understand, flows in a logical fashion, and is well-organized. Major strengths include the concept of three patterns of geographic transmission described on page two; an excellent review of travel-related prophylaxis for HIV-infected on page ten, and modifications of immunizations and for the HIV-infected on page twelve. The discussion of arguments against routine screening of international travelers described in page six is logical and raises the major relevant points.

An additional table, table 2, should supplement the text on page two, perhaps as follows:

PATTERN	DATES	AFFECTED POPULATIONS	GEOGRAPHIC AREAS
I			
II			
III			

The tabular form would offer a very good visual look at this important concept even though it has been published elsewhere.

A significant deficiency in the manuscript is the glossing over of the issue of the infected blood supply in underdeveloped countries, particularly Africa. A paper which devotes eight full lines to rates of HIV infection in American prostitutes should logically devote at least one sentence to the rates of infection in the blood supply in various African communities. This glossing over is managed in subtle ways including on page four, "parenteral transmission", when even in the CDC guidelines, HIV transmission by IV drug use and blood and blood products are separated.

Section B should be divided into two groups: 1) intravenous drug use, and 2) blood and blood products. Under blood and blood products, the authors should delineate the percent of HIV infection in donated blood in various African countries and by region, e.g., Region 1, Region 2, and Region 3. They should also indicate if there are any known instances of foreigners becoming infected by untested blood. The calculations of the likelihood of need for blood transfusion are reassuring and are appropriately included.

The statistics on infection in American and European prostitutes are given equal attention with statistics on infection in African prostitutes even though transmission by American and European prostitutes has not been a major or even substantiated means of transmission. Sexual habits of travelers, sexuality of businessmen in Asia, and real risk to travelers who frequent prostitutes or have anonymous sexual contacts should be expanded.

In the initial abstract which is nicely done otherwise, sentence 3 beginning, "intercourse or reduced by avoiding such contact with - NEW INSERT - "intravenous drug users, homosexual men, or persons who have multiple sexual partners.....". The admonition to avoid injury-prone behavior such as having automobile accidents and being courteous to any ornery rhinoceros is good advice.

The final paragraph of the summary is a little bit too much of a whitewash for a scientific publication. It reads much more like a paragraph out of a magazine entitled, "Modern Traveler".

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS:

Figure 2 lacks an appropriate legend; its inclusion seems appropriate as it indicates what W.H.O. is putting out to international travelers. The map, likewise, would not logically include the French subtitles.



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