

and lessons about poisonous sea animals, motion sickness, food poisoning and scombrototoxicism, drug administration routes and radio-medico service. The manual has 97 pages and 90 illustrations and photographs, black and white, as well as color. It also has a map of places on our coast where medical help is available, and protocols to be used when radio-medico advice is requested. The manual is written in Croat language and an English edition is in print at the moment. Because our sailing school is international, Italian and German editions are planned too.

Together with appropriate medical knowledge of skippers, medical kits and radio-medico advice, this manual will contribute to improvement of safety on the Adriatic Sea.

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## Dental Precautions for Travelers

### To the Editor:

We read with interest the excellent article by Kedjarune and Leggat.<sup>1</sup> We disagree, however, with their statement that "there have been no reports of transmission of diseases such as AIDS from infected dentists to patients."

In 1990-91, the Centers for Disease Control described six patients who acquired HIV infection while receiving care from a dentist with HIV infection.<sup>2,3</sup> We agree that it still remains unknown how these patients became infected, but on the other hand transmission of hepatitis B from dentist to patients during dental procedures has also been reported.<sup>3,4</sup> Given the prevalence of HIV, hepatitis B and hepatitis C infections in developing countries and the fact that universal precautions

are not always applied, there may be a small risk of transmission of these infections from health care workers to patients during invasive procedures. The main risk, however, is the patient-to-patient transmission because of inadequate sterilization procedures.

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## References

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## The Authors Reply

### To the Editor:

The letter by Florence, Van Gompel and Colebunders<sup>1</sup> correctly reinforces our statement that "the serious risks (of dental treatment abroad for travelers) are HIV, hepatitis B, hepatitis C and similarly transmitted viruses."<sup>2</sup> The statement referred to, that "however, there have been no reports of transmission of diseases such as AIDS from infected dentists to patients," needs to be taken in the context of the former statement made in this sentence, as above, where we acknowledge the "serious risks."<sup>2</sup>

Although Florence et al. acknowledge that transmission of HIV in the case series described<sup>3,4</sup> remains obscure, we agree that HIV transmission from dentist to patients is possible. As pointed out by Florence et al., hepatitis B transmission from dentists to patients is known to occur,<sup>5,6</sup> and, in our paper, we went further to suggest that, for those patients intending to have dental treatment abroad, hepatitis B vaccination should be discussed.

Florence et al. also reinforce the issue of "cross-infection" raised in our paper, since perhaps the greatest risk is transmission of these viruses is "patient-to-patient transmission because of inadequate sterilization procedures."<sup>1</sup>

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