

# Avoiding Diarrhoea

Human beings are highly civilised. Tourists are not. For some reason they get careless on holiday and forget all about food hygiene, and end up spending most of their holiday on the toilet. Don't forget that foreign water and food is teeming with diseases.

It's not just the croc's that we have to look out for in foreign waters.

## **Civilised human beings:**

- ✓ Drink only bottled water (check the seal), or sterilise your water. Water filters or iodine tablets are good for avoiding most diseases.
- ✓ Boiling hot drinks are generally safe.
- ✓ Eat freshly cooked hot food.
- ✓ Wash and peel fruit and vegetables.
- ✓ Wash your hands before eating or handling food.

## **Toilet loving tourists who don't mind getting diarrhoea:**

- ✗ Put ice in drinks or clean teeth with unbottled water.
- ✗ Drink from lakes or rivers.
- ✗ Eat reheated food or food left standing which may have been exposed to flies.
- ✗ Eat food which comes from places where bugs live. These are shellfish, salads, mayonnaise (and other dishes containing uncooked egg) and unpasteurised milk or ice cream made from unpasteurised milk.

## **The news in brief: Boil it, cook it, peel it or leave it.**

## **But....nobody's perfect.....so what do you do if you get diarrhoea?**

- ☺ Drink plenty of fluids. Aim to make your urine (pee) clear, rather than yellow.
- ☺ Continue eating whatever you can tolerate.
- ☺ If you have some, use oral rehydration sachets, especially if your diarrhoea is very watery.
- ☺ Seek medical advice if your diarrhoea is bloody, or you have a fever, or if your diarrhoea has not started to improve after seven days.
- ☺ If you are going to a remote location, the Gobi desert or the Amazonian rain forest for example, consider taking medicines that will treat bloody diarrhoea effectively. Ciprofloxacin 500 mg twice a day for three days will treat most bacterial infections that cause bloody diarrhoea. Metronidazole 800mg three times a day for five days will treat bloody diarrhoea caused by amoeba (a parasite). If you can not have your stool (poo) examined by a doctor within three days and you get bloody diarrhoea, treat it as if you have a bacterial infection. If the diarrhoea is no better after the ciprofloxacin then treat it as an amoeba infection with metronidazole.