

## **CHAGAS' DISEASE (AMERICAN TRYPANOSOMIASIS)**

Hikers in rural areas in Latin America (except in the Caribbean) must be alerted to the risk of an infection due to a unicellular parasite, called *Trypanosoma cruzi*. The disease is transmitted via bloodsucking insects, related to bedbugs. In endemic areas you should certainly not stay overnight in primitive huts or in the open air. If you cannot or do not want to avoid this, and also if you stay overnight in small cheap hotels, you must always sleep under a mosquito net (preferably with a sheet over the mosquito net to prevent contact with the faeces dropping from the triatomas). You are advised to use an insecticide spray if there are any large insects in the room (usually hidden behind picture frames, in drawers, or even under the mattress). In the evenings you should also apply insect repellent to the exposed parts of the skin.