

Title: Malaria: Diagnosis and Prevention

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Abstract: Malaria is one of the most common infectious diseases around the world. It causes fever, chills, and sweats, and can have severe renal and cerebral manifestations. It is important that all patients understand the risk associated with malaria, even those who have previously been exposed when living in endemic areas. This pamphlet identifies at risk travelers, signs and symptoms of malaria infection, and gives ideas for malaria prevention.

This document was created by a medical student enrolled in the Primary Care Clerkship at the University of Minnesota Medical School as part of the course project. The aim of the project is to present information on a medical topic in the format of a patient education handout. It does not necessarily reflect the views of the University of Minnesota Medical School physicians and faculty. These materials are provided for informational purposes only and are in no way intended to take the place of the advice and recommendations of your personal health care provider. The information provided may no longer be up to date since it has not been reviewed since the date of creation. The information provided should not be used to diagnose a health problem or disease, or as a means of determining treatment. In the event of a medical emergency, immediately contact a doctor or call 911.

What is malaria?

Malaria is found all over the world. You get malaria from mosquitoes. Only mosquitoes that already have malaria can make you sick.

Malaria first goes to your liver. From there it spreads to your blood and the rest of your body. Malaria is important because it can hurt your kidneys or brain if not treated.

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Malaria

To learn more about malaria go to:

Center for Disease Control

<http://www.cdc.gov/malaria/facts.htm>

World Health Organization

<http://www.who.int/topics/malaria/en/>

Made by Nicholas Jubert

Diagnosis and Prevention

Malaria is in blood and is spread by mosquitoes

How do I get malaria?

Anyone who travels to a place where there is malaria is at risk, even if you used to live in these areas. Any protection gained from earlier contact with malaria goes away within several months of living in a malaria free area.

Because of the way malaria is spread, you are at increased risk if you:

- Travel to rural areas
- Travel for more than 3 weeks
- Spend a lot of time outside
- Stay with friends or family

What are the signs of malaria?

It is important to know if you have malaria. Here is what to look for if you are sick.

1. Hot (fever)
2. Cold (chills)
3. Wet (sweating)

But malaria can show up in many ways, usual signs can be:

How can I protect against malaria?

Protect yourself from mosquito bites:

- Wear bug spray with at least 30% DEET
- Use bed nets
- Do not go outside during dawn and dusk

Protect yourself in case you do get bit:

- Take anti-malarial medicine from your doctor

These rules will help protect you from malaria, but you can still get it.

What if I am pregnant?

Pregnant women need to protect themselves because malaria can make the baby sick. Taking drugs to fight malaria is good because they are much safer for you and your baby than getting malaria.

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Areas that have a lot of malaria