

Health Care Education Malaria



Hidaya Foundation

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And when I am sick, then He heals me. - - - Al Quran – Ash-Shuraa, Verse 26:80

Malaria

What is Malaria? Malaria is a serious disease caused by parasites. One of the parasites, if not promptly treated, may cause kidney failure, seizures, mental confusion, coma, and death.

What are the symptoms of Malaria? Patients with malaria have flu-like illness. Malaria symptoms include: Fever, rigors (Shivering or trembling, as caused by a chill), headaches, sweating, tiredness, myalgia (pain in the muscles of limbs and back), abdominal pain, diarrhea, loss of appetite, orthostatic hypotension (low blood pressure when one stands up), nausea, slight jaundice, cough, enlarged liver and spleen (sometimes not obvious), vomiting.

How is Malaria spread? Usually, people get malaria by being bitten by an infected female Anopheles mosquito.

Because the malaria parasite is found in red blood cells, malaria can also be transmitted through blood transfusion, organ transplant, or the shared use of needles or syringes contaminated with blood. Malaria may also be transmitted from a mother to her fetus before or during delivery ("congenital" malaria).

Malaria is not transmitted from person to person like a cold or the flu. You cannot get malaria from casual contact with malaria-infected people.

How can I prevent myself and my family from getting Malaria? You and your family can prevent malaria by

- keeping mosquitoes from biting you, especially at night
- taking antimalarial drugs to kill the parasites
- eliminating places around your home where mosquitoes breed
- spraying insecticides on your home's walls to kill adult mosquitoes that come inside

- sleeping under bed nets - especially effective if they have been treated with insecticide, and wearing insect repellent and long-sleeved clothing if out of doors at night.

How do you know if you have Malaria?

Symptoms include fever and flu-like illness, including shaking chills, headache, muscle aches, and tiredness. Nausea, vomiting, and diarrhea may also occur. Malaria may cause anemia and jaundice (yellow coloring of the skin and eyes) because of the loss of red blood cells. Infection with one type of malaria, *Plasmodium falciparum*, if not promptly treated, may cause kidney failure, seizures, mental confusion, coma, and death.

Who should get tested for Malaria? If you can answer "YES" to any of these questions, please see your doctor immediately because you might have Malaria.

Please answer these questions honestly.

Currently, or in the past – have you:

- | | | |
|--|-----|----|
| - Experienced fever and flu-like illness? | Yes | No |
| - had fever with sweating and shaking chills? | Yes | No |
| - Had headaches, Muscle aches, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea and tiredness? | Yes | No |
| - Had jaundice? | Yes | No |

What should you do if test Positive for Malaria?

The disease should be treated early in its course, before it becomes severe and poses a risk to the patient's life. Several good antimalarial drugs are available, and should be administered early on. The most important step is to think about malaria, so that the disease is diagnosed and treated in time.

Sources: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (National Center for Infectious Diseases, Division of Parasitic Diseases, 2005)