

Where Can I Get More Information?

Malaria is a serious disease that can be fatal and should be treated immediately. Persons infected with malaria can generally be easily cured when treated promptly by their doctor.

Additional malaria information can be found on the CDC Malaria Web site at <http://www.cdc.gov/malaria/> or by calling the toll free Fax number 1-888-232-3299.

This brochure is for information only and is not meant to be used for self diagnosis or as a substitute for consultation with a doctor. If you have any questions about malaria, please speak with your doctor or call your local health department.



Malaria: An Important Message for Non-Travelers



What is Malaria?

Malaria occurs throughout the world. It is a serious disease that can be fatal which is caused by a parasite called *Plasmodium* (plaz-MO-dee-um). There are four kinds of malaria that can infect humans: *Plasmodium falciparum* (fal-SIP-a-rum), *P. vivax* (VI-vacks), *P. ovale* (o-VOL-ley), and *P. malariae* (ma-LER-ee-aa).

How common is Malaria in the United States?

About 1,200 cases of malaria are diagnosed in the United States every year. Most cases in the United States are found in people who traveled to other countries where malaria is common, mostly to sub-Saharan Africa and to the Indian subcontinent.

Although rare, individuals who do not travel outside of the United States can be infected with malaria in the United States. Malaria can be transmitted from mother to baby during pregnancy, through blood transfusions, or by the bite of locally infected *Anopheles* mosquitoes.



How is Malaria spread?

The parasite is passed from person to person through the bite of an infected female *Anopheles* mosquito, which requires blood to grow her eggs. An *Anopheles* mosquito becomes infected when it bites a person who is infected with malaria. The malaria parasite then grows in the mosquito, and after the parasite matures (at least a week), the mosquito can then pass malaria on to the next person it bites.

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

What are the symptoms?

Persons infected with malaria can have a flu-like illness, including:

- Fever
- Chills
- Headache
- Muscle aches
- Tiredness

Loss of appetite, nausea, vomiting, and diarrhea may also occur. If untreated, malaria can progress rapidly and become life threatening.

How can I prevent mosquito bites?

To prevent mosquito bites, you and your family should:

- Avoid or limit outdoor activities between dusk and dawn.
- Wear long pants, a long sleeve shirt and socks outdoors between dusk and dawn.
- Use an insect repellent containing DEET on exposed skin. *For more information, go to:* http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dvbid/westnile/qa/insect_repellent.htm
- Close windows at night or install screens in windows and doors if left open at night.



What should I do if I think I may have been infected with Malaria?

If you or anyone in your family should experience any of the reported symptoms, it is very important that you contact your doctor immediately. Malaria is diagnosed by looking for the parasites in a drop of blood. Malaria can be cured with medication.