

## What is malaria?

Malaria is a disease that is caused by a parasite. It is usually spread through the bite of infected mosquitoes. It can also spread through infected blood, such as from a blood transfusion.

## What increases risk for malaria?

Risk is increased if patient live in or travel to an area where malaria is common. Risk also increases if he have a weak immune system. This includes pregnant women, infants and children, and people with HIV.

## What are the signs and symptoms of malaria?

- Fever
- Shaking chills
- Sweating
- Headache and muscle pain
- Nausea and vomiting
- Abdominal pain or diarrhea

## How malaria diagnosed?

Diagnosis of malaria depends on the demonstration of parasites in the blood, usually by microscopy. Additional laboratory findings may include mild anemia, mild decrease in blood platelets (thrombocytopenia), elevation of bilirubin, and elevation of aminotransferases.

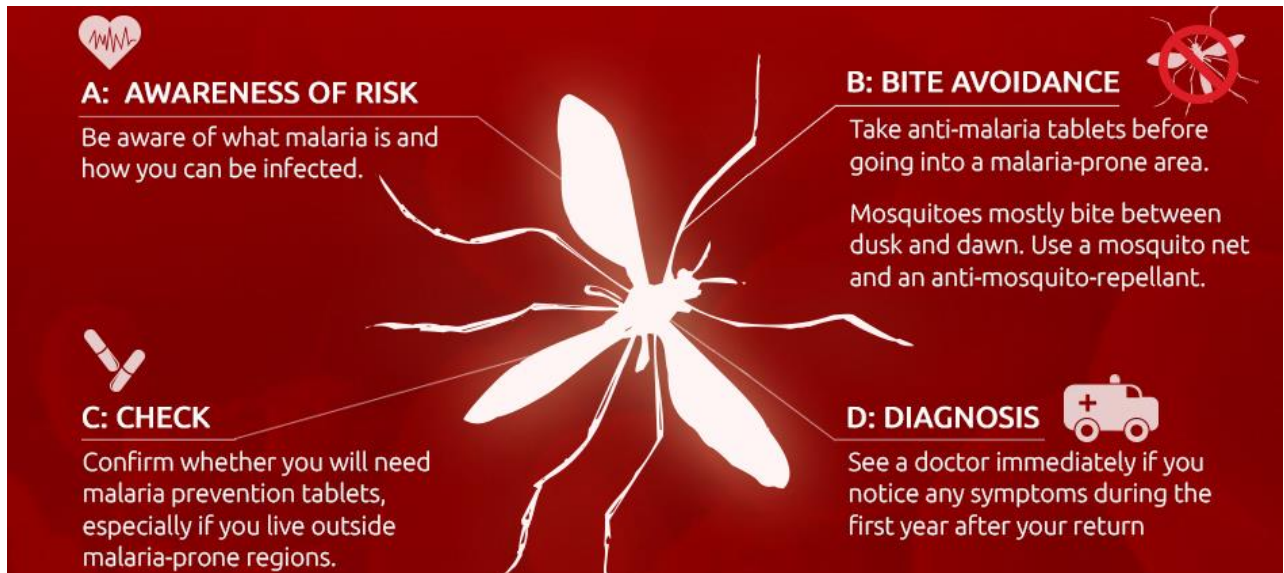
## How is malaria treated?

- **Malaria medicine:** This is given to kill the parasites that are causing infection. The kind of medicine used depends on what kind of parasite is causing the malaria.
- **Acetaminophen:** This medicine decreases pain and fever. Acetaminophen is available without a doctor's order. Ask how much to take and how often to take it. Follow directions. Acetaminophen can cause liver damage if not taken correctly.
- **NSAIDs,** such as ibuprofen, help decrease swelling, pain, and fever. This medicine is available with or without a doctor's order. NSAIDs can cause stomach bleeding or kidney problems in certain people. If you take blood thinner medicine, **always** ask if NSAIDs are safe for you. Always read the medicine label and follow directions. **Do not give these medicines to children under 6 months of age without direction from child's healthcare provider.**

## How can malaria be prevented?

- **Spray your clothing and skin:** Apply an insect repellent to skin, clothing, and other fabrics, such as blankets.
- **Cover your skin:** Wear long-sleeved shirts and pants to keep skin covered. Do not go outside at night.

- **Sleep under a mosquito net:** Spray insect repellent on your mosquito net. Check your net for holes often.
- **Protect your home:** Put screens on windows and doors to keep mosquitoes out. Use insecticide inside your home to kill mosquitoes that come into your house.
- **Remove all standing water around home:** Mosquitoes lay their eggs and mature in water.



**Reference:** Micromedex's Care Notes System Online 2.0