

Malaria

Defination:

Malaria is a life threatening mosquito borne blood disease, mostly in hot and humid ^{-places}

Causes:

It is caused by an infected female Anopheles mosquito. Infected mosquito carries parasite Plasmodium which enters the bloodstream when it bites a person. From bloodstream the parasite travels to liver and infect blood cells. Within 48 to 72 hours the parasite inside the blood cells multiply, causing the infected cells to burst open. It continues to infect cells that result in several symptoms that occur in cycles that last two to three days at a time.

Symptoms:

The symptoms of malaria vary typically develop within 10 days to 4 weeks. In some cases symptoms may not develop for several months due to dormancy of parasite in body. Some common symptoms include

- Shaking Chills that can range from moderate to severe
- high fever
- profuse sweating
- headache
- nausea
- vomiting
- Diarrhea
- abdominal Pain
- Convulsions
- bloody stools
- Anemia

Diagnosis

A Doctor will be able to diagnose malaria. During appointment he will review health history of a person including travel to tropical climates. A physical exam will also be performed.

The doctor will be able to determine if a person have an enlarged spleen or liver, and other symptoms of Malaria. Blood test can be ordered which can indicate.

- The presence of parasite in blood, to confirm a person have malaria.

- Which type of malarial parasite is causing symptoms.

- If the infection caused by Parasite is resistant to certain drugs.

Treatment:

Malaria is treated with prescription drugs to kill parasite. The types of drugs and length of treatment depends on;

- The severity of symptoms
- Age of person
- Whether the patient is pregnant

Prevention:

If a person lives in or travelling to an area where malaria is common he/she should take steps to avoid mosquito bite. Mosquitoes are most active between dawn and dusk. Following measures should be taken:

- Cover your skin
- Apply insect repellents to skin and clothing.
- Sleep under a net.