

# Malaria and Dengue *Colombia*

epidemiological outlook, warning signs and prevention



# Malaria

Malaria is an infection caused by a parasite called Plasmodium, which mostly spreads to people through the bites of some infected female Anopheles mosquitoes. The infection must be diagnosed by clinical labora-



In **2021** there were  
**247 M**  
malaria cases  
worldwide

Malaria in Colombia mainly affects socioeconomically vulnerable communities located in municipalities at or below 1,600 meters above sea level.

## Symptoms

- Fever
- Vomiting and/or headache.
- The most common bodily symptoms are fever, sweating and chills (malarial triad).
- **Symptom duration:** Approximately 15 days, depending on the species and the physical and immunological conditions of the patient.

## Warning signs

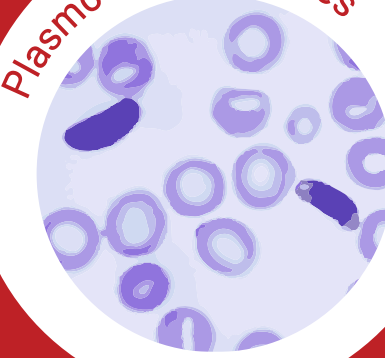
- Jaundice (yellowing of the eyes and skin and mucous membranes)
- Impaired consciousness
- Difficulty breathing
- Persistent vomiting and diarrhea



## Additional care

Infection should be confirmed by clinical and laboratory diagnosis. Assessment, evolution and follow-up by medical staff is always required to ensure the effectiveness of the treatment.

Plasmodium parasites



## Medicines

Dosage and medicine type varies according to Plasmodium species.

## Drug precautions

Strictly take only recommended or prescribed medication.

## Prevention

Wear full body-covering clothing and use repellent and a mosquito net when sleeping in endemic areas.

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There are more than 400 different species of **Anopheles** mosquitoes and about **40** known **vector** species that can **transmit** the disease.

# DENGUE:

It is a viral infection spread by the bite of infected female mosquitos (Aedes aegypti).



## Symptoms

- Moderate fever to incapacitating high fever.
- Severe headache.
- Pain behind the eyes (retro-orbicular).
- Muscle and joint pain.
- Allergy-like rash.
- **Symptom duration: 2 to 7 days**

## Warning signs

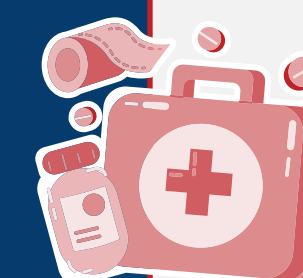
The infection may progress to **severe dengue fever**, characterized by **shortness of breath**, **severe bleeding** due to **decreased platelets** (fragments involved in the blood clotting process) and/or severe **complications** in **different organs** that may lead to death.



In Colombia, dengue is a priority public health concern with an endemic-epidemic behavior, with outbreaks every 3 years.



It is estimated that each year there are **100 - 400 MILLION** infections worldwide



## Medicines

There is no curative medication. Acetaminophen (paracetamol) is given every 6 hours (maximum of 4 doses per day).

## Medication precautions

**Do not use ibuprofen, aspirin, or any medication containing aspirin**, as it may **complicate the infection**.



## Prevention

Wear full body-covering clothing and use repellent and a mosquito net when sleeping in endemic areas.

Mosquitoes are not born with the virus. They acquire the virus only by biting an infected person and then spread it by biting other people.



## Additional care

**If the case has been confirmed**, either by clinical laboratory or from symptoms, **treatment includes rest and staying well-hydrated** (no sugary drinks). If **symptoms worsen** within a week or there is no visible improvement, go to a **hospital** and report that you were in an **endemic area** and if necessary, request a clinical examination (blood count with platelet count).