

Malaria Fact Sheet

What is malaria?

Malaria is one of the biggest killers in the world. WHO estimates that each year nearly 300 million people become acutely ill from malaria – and more than 1 million will die from the disease.¹ Illness and death from malaria are largely preventable.¹

Malaria infects nearly 300 million people each year

Where is malaria prevalent?

Forty percent of the world's population—mostly people living in the world's poorest countries—is at risk of contracting malaria. The disease is most prevalent in tropical and sub-tropical areas of the world, but 90 percent of malaria-related deaths occur in sub-Saharan Africa. Other affected areas include India, Southeast Asia, Central and northern South America.²

90% of malaria-related deaths occur in sub-Saharan Africa

Who is most affected by malaria?

Sadly, the people most at-risk of contracting malaria are young children, women who lose their acquired immunity to malaria during pregnancy, and people who lack any immunity to the disease, such as refugees and migrant workers moving from areas where there is little malaria.³ Malaria is Africa's leading cause of mortality for children under five. Neurological damage can result in non-fatal cases.^{4,5}

Young children, pregnant women and people who lack any immunity to the disease

What are the economic costs of malaria in Africa?

Malaria is estimated to cost Africa more than USD 12 billion every year in lost GDP. It is both a disease of poverty and a cause of poverty, with economic growth in countries with high malaria transmission significantly lower than in countries without malaria.⁶

Malaria costs USD 12 billion every year in lost GDP in Africa

How much is spent on malaria-related items in areas with high malaria transmission?

In areas with high malaria transmission, malaria accounts for 40 percent of public health expenditure, 30 - 50 percent of inpatient admissions, and up to 50 percent of outpatient visits.⁶

40% of public health expenditure

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Malaria Fact Sheet

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