



## Malaria



### Overview

This is a serious disease. It's caused by a single-celled parasite that lives and multiplies in your liver and bloodstream. It feeds on your red blood cells, destroying them. Malaria can make you very sick.

### Causes

How do you get malaria? It doesn't spread directly from person to person. Most often, you get it from an infected mosquito. The type of mosquito that carries malaria lives in warm climates. When this mosquito bites you, the parasite gets into your blood. Malaria can also spread in a few other ways. You can get it from a blood transfusion. You can get it from an organ transplant. You can get it from a contaminated needle. And, a pregnant woman can spread it to the fetus inside her.

### Symptoms

What are the symptoms of malaria? You can have fever, chills, shaking and sweating. You may feel tired. You may have headaches and body aches. Malaria can cause nausea, vomiting and diarrhea. It can also cause anemia, and a yellowing of the skin and eyes that we call "jaundice."

### Treatment

Malaria is treated with medications. There's more than one type of malaria, and the different types can require different medications. But with proper treatment, you can be cured.

### Prevention

If you live in or plan to visit a place where you may get malaria, take steps to prevent it. Your doctor can give you medicine to help you avoid an infection. Also, avoid mosquito bites. Ask your doctor for more information about malaria prevention.