

HEALTH MATTERS MONTHLY

WHAT IS MALARIA?

Malaria is a life-threatening disease transmitted through bites of infected female Anopheles mosquitoes. It remains a major public health concern in Kenya, especially in high-risk regions.

KEY SYMPTOMS



Fever and chills



Headache and body aches



Fatigue



Vomiting (especially in children)



Severe cases: anemia, confusion, seizures

MOST VULNERABLE GROUPS



Children under 5 years



Pregnant women

Children may show persistent fever, poor feeding, and lethargy. Pregnant women may experience weakness, fever, and complications affecting the baby.

ENVIRONMENTAL RISK FACTORS



Stagnant water (breeding sites)



Poor drainage systems



High rainfall and warm temperatures



Uncollected waste

PREVENTION TIPS



- Sleep under insecticide-treated mosquito nets
- Use mosquito repellents
- Wear long-sleeved clothing at night
- Clear stagnant water around your home
- Seek early medical care



QUICK HEALTH TIP



Early diagnosis and treatment saves lives. Do not ignore fever—get tested immediately at a health facility.

HIGH-RISK MALARIA AREAS IN KENYA

Malaria risk varies across the country, with certain regions experiencing higher transmission rates throughout the year or seasonally.

High-risk areas include:

- Lake endemic regions (e.g., around Lake Victoria)
- Coastal regions
- Western Kenya counties
- Areas with high rainfall and poor drainage

Seasonal risk areas:

- Parts of Central and Eastern Kenya during rainy seasons



PRECAUTIONS WHEN VISITING HIGH-RISK AREAS

If you are planning to travel to a malaria-prone area, take the following precautions:

Before Travel:

- Consult a healthcare provider on preventive medication (prophylaxis) if necessary
- Pack insect repellents and long-sleeved clothing
- Carry a treated mosquito net if unsure of availability

During Your Stay:

- Sleep under insecticide-treated mosquito nets
- Apply mosquito repellent regularly, especially in the evening
- Wear long-sleeved clothes and trousers at night
- Stay in well-screened or air-conditioned rooms where possible
- Avoid outdoor exposure during peak mosquito activity (dusk to dawn)

WHAT TO DO AFTER VISITING A HIGH-RISK AREA

Your vigilance should continue even after leaving the area:

- Monitor for symptoms such as fever, chills, headache, or fatigue
- Seek immediate medical testing if symptoms appear (even weeks after travel)
- Inform the healthcare provider about your recent travel history
- Avoid self-medication without proper diagnosis



IMPORTANT REMINDER:

Malaria symptoms can appear up to several weeks after exposure. Early testing and treatment are critical.



Author

Duke Omara

Provider Relations

Britam

Britam Pharmacy First Network

