



[www.UnitedAgainstMalaria.org](http://www.UnitedAgainstMalaria.org)

# Malaria

## Fact Sheet

### WHAT IS MALARIA?

Malaria is a disease caused by parasites of the *Plasmodium* species.

It is transmitted to humans through the bite of an infected mosquito. The parasite enters the bloodstream and causes fever, headaches and other flu-like symptoms. If left untreated, the infection in its most severe forms can lead to a coma and death.

#### WHO DOES MALARIA AFFECT?

Malaria disproportionately affects the poor, particularly children and pregnant women on the African continent who are more likely to be exposed to infection and have the most limited access to malaria prevention, treatment, and control measures.

- Malaria kills a child every 30 seconds and overall nearly one million people each year
- Worldwide, 3.3 billion people are at risk of malaria – that's half of the world population
- Ninety-one percent of malaria deaths occur in Africa; 85 percent of these are children under 5 years of age
- In addition to the death toll, malaria contributes to the cycle of poverty and limits economic development: Malaria illness and death cost Africa at least \$12 billion in lost productivity every year
- 26.3 percent of children with cerebral malaria test positive for cognitive impairment two years later

#### CAN WE REDUCE MALARIA DEATHS?

YES. Malaria is a preventable and treatable disease; for \$10 you can protect a mother and

child for up to five years. Simple tools like mosquito nets, effective medicines and safe indoor spraying can save lives. Furthermore, progress toward developing malaria vaccines has accelerated greatly in recent years thanks to an increase in funding and awareness.

#### SUCCESS IS WITHIN OUR GRASP

In addition to more developed countries like the U.S., where malaria was eradicated in 1951, several African countries, such as Eritrea, Rwanda São Tomé and Príncipe and Zambia have demonstrated that it is possible to significantly reduce malaria-related morbidity and mortality. By acting now, we can achieve unprecedented increases in mosquito net coverage across Africa by the end of 2010 and save millions of lives by the next World Cup in 2014.

#### WHO WE ARE

United Against Malaria is a partnership of football teams and heroes, celebrities, health and advocacy organizations, governments, corporations, and people like you who have united ahead of the 2010 World Cup in South Africa to win the fight against malaria.





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