

# Malaria

By: Laura

## Introduction

Imagine having the symptoms of the common flu for several weeks, and instead of gradually recovering, only experiencing greater discomfort. What should have been the final stages of sickness are in fact only the beginning. As each symptom worsens, new ones are added. It becomes almost impossible to hold down food, and sleeping is no longer restful with nightmares and hallucinations. Breathing becomes a pain. What would you do?

Most people would call a doctor. What if you had no phone, because you lived in poverty? What if you could not so easily just visit a doctor because there was none nearby, or because too many others were sick with your same disease and there are not enough doctors around? If you do not treat this disease early, you run the risk of becoming incurable. If you do not treat it at all, you will most likely not recover on your own.

This life-threatening disease exists and is a global threat to many. It is called Malaria and exists in areas where the Anopheles mosquito lives. People get malaria usually by being bitten by an infected female Anopheles mosquito. When people get Malaria they become very sick with high fevers, shaking and flu-like symptoms. Places where the Anopheles mosquito exist, are mostly in Africa, but it also exist in others like Latin America and Asia. It is life-threatening. In fact, in 2013, there were about 207 million cases, resulting in about 627,000 deaths. This is only the number of deaths recorded, and not the full number, because most people wouldn't even be accessible to record.

Although, most people do not live in threat of Malaria unless they travel to places where it exists, it is important that they educate themselves about this disease. As awareness increases, so will an effort to prevent the disease. Generally, people are more likely to fight against something bad when they understand how it affects people, and how their efforts directly help prevent it. Globally, we need to inform ourselves and others about Malaria, and then join the fight to prevent it.

## Explain the Issue

Malaria is a major problem. Each year, millions of people become very sick because of malaria, and hundreds of thousands die. Not only does it affect people's health, but it also affects those around them. For example, if parents become sick with malaria, then they won't be able to take care of and provide for their children. The problem is that most people in the affected areas are so poor that they can't afford preventive measures like bug spray or mosquito nets. The actual cost of an insecticide-treated mosquito net is only about \$3 but even that people can't afford. This shows that malaria is linked with poverty and is an issue where the poorest of people live.

## Current Events

Malaria mostly affects people globally. It isn't an issue in the United States anymore because it was eradicated many decades ago. It only affects people locally if they travel to a malaria-infested country and get sick there. However, malaria is still a big problem in many other countries that have swamp areas. Most of these countries are in Africa and South- or Latin America. All these countries have similar hot, humid and swampy areas. Overall, malaria is a big issue in many countries that don't have care for the mosquitos, are hot, humid and swampy and can't access preventable measures.

Many people don't have an opinion about malaria because they don't see the disease in their surroundings and are not exposed or affected by it. Other people think it's not their responsibility to do something about. They think that the affected countries are responsible to deal with it. This is not true. It is our responsibility to help those who can't help themselves, no matter where they live in this world. Fortunately, there are also people who feel bad for all the suffering that is caused by malaria. They realize that it is quite easy and inexpensive to help to prevent the disease by donating money to organizations that will help.

## Methods of Change

Currently, many new things are happening, and progress is being made in the fight against Malaria. According to World Health Organisation's World Malaria Report 2013, Malaria death rates have continued to decline, although it is still a big issue for many. Right now, 3.4 million people are at risk of Malaria, of which 1.2 billion are at high risk. There was an estimate of 207 million cases of Malaria in 2012. Malaria is treatable as well as preventable and we have the tools to end deaths from Malaria, but we must expand access to tools which already exist and develop new ones to win the fight against Malaria. Since 2000, Malaria death rates have fallen 51%. Even though we are making a lot of progress, there is still much work to be done.

There are many organizations that are trying to address this issue. Two organizations that I am going to talk about are Malaria No More and The Malaria Foundation International. These organizations help globally. However, there aren't any organizations which help locally because Malaria isn't an issue here in the United States, but there are many in countries with the threat of malaria. The organization Malaria No More, which is a global organization is donating mosquito nets and bug spray to prevent the disease, bought by the donations of people like you and me. Nets are the most effective way of preventing malaria. Mosquitoes are most active at night, so if you sleep under a mosquito net then you protect yourself against life-threatening bites while you sleep. Bug spray is the next most effective, it repels mosquitoes.

The Malaria Foundation International is also helping. It raises awareness about malaria and they try and help find a simple solution to end malaria. For example, it advocates World Malaria Day, which is on April 25th. They also use donations to provide immunizations.

These are two examples of global organizations that help fight malaria.

## Current Events

There are many organizations in the world that helping to address this issue. But, what are students my age, in sixth grade, doing? Well, one thing that all of us have been doing since we were in kindergarten is Trick or Treat for UNICEF. Some of the money that we have collected goes to distributing nets and bug spray to families living in places where malaria is a common threat. This is one of the simple ways we can help prevent this disease.

Do you want to make a change and end this disease? Here are some organizations that you can donate to.

Organization	How it helps	Contact info
Malaria No More	Provide nets+ bug spray	URL: <a href="http://www.malarianomore.org">www.malarianomore.org</a> Address: 432 Park Avenue South, 4th Floor New York, NY 10016 Number: 212-792-7929
Malaria Foundation International	Raises awareness and help find solutions	URL: <a href="http://www.malaria.org">http://www.malaria.org</a> send checks or inquiries to Dr. Mary R. Galinski, President Malaria Foundation International 2120 Spencers Way Stone Mountain, GA 30087 E-mail: <a href="mailto:Donations@malaria.org">Donations@malaria.org</a>
UNICEF	Provides help globally	<a href="http://www.unicef.org">www.unicef.org</a> Number: (800) 367-5437 Mail address: United States Fund for UNICEF 125 Maiden Lane New York, NY 10038

If none of them interest you, you can also spread awareness about this disease, or consider starting your own fundraiser. To help fight against this disease I want to have bake sales, lemonade stands or other types of fundraisers to raise awareness and donations. Another thing I want to do is make posters and tell other people more about this disease, because the more people know, the more people want to end it.

## Conclusion

This report shows our need to understand this issue. Not only does my report provide a way for people to help prevent it, but it also talks about ways that we can do. I want take action on this issue either by donating to organizations and

projects I talked about, or by starting my own little fundraisers. We can make a world without malaria possible, even if our efforts seem small, they will make a difference in the future.

## Bibliography

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