

Malaria

Malaria is a reportable disease 1-800-821-5821

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Definition

Malaria is a mosquito-borne parasitic disease. Malaria is not commonly found in the United States, but travelers may become infected overseas. When untreated, this disease can be very serious and even fatal.

Signs and Symptoms

Symptoms of malaria often include: chills, sweats, headache, nausea, vomiting, weight loss, muscle pains, elevated temperature, and general fatigue. The more serious symptoms (typically caused by *P. falciparum*) include: confusion, coma, respiratory difficulties and severe red blood cell loss.

Transmission

Malaria is spread through the bite of an infected mosquito.

Diagnosis

Malaria is diagnosed through a blood smear or laboratory testing.

Treatment recommendations

Several effective treatments are available; some of the more common ones include Chloroquine, Mefloquine, Doxycycline, Primaquine, Artemether/lumefantrine and Atovaquone/proguanil.

Role of the School Nurse

Prevention

- Remind students and faculty who may be traveling overseas to consider using malaria prophylaxis, to protect against mosquito bites with repellent and bed nets, and to watch for symptoms
- Monitor students and faculty who recently traveled overseas to endemic areas for 10 days to a month for symptoms

Exclusions

- There is no need to exclude students from school for malaria
- Educational modifications may be warranted in children with a positive diagnosis

Reporting Requirements

- Malaria is a reportable disease at 1-800-821-5821

Resources

- Federal CDC Malaria website: <http://www.cdc.gov/malaria/>