

Malaria prevention





If you are thinking of travelling outside the UK for a holiday or work, start preparing for your trip, especially long trips, at least eight weeks before you go. But even if time is short it is never too late to get travel health advice.

Where can I get information?

You can get advice on malaria prevention and general travel health advice from community pharmacies, your GP practice and private travel clinics.

You can also access travel health advice from:

- Travel Health Pro
www.travelhealthpro.org.uk/countries
- Fit for Travel
www.fitfortravel.nhs.uk/advice.aspx
- NHS Choices
www.nhs.uk/conditions
- Gov.uk foreign travel advice
www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice

What is malaria?

Malaria is a serious illness that is common in many parts of Africa, Asia, South America and some areas in the Far and Middle East. The risk is particularly high in sub-Saharan Africa.

The disease is spread by mosquitoes that bite at night (dusk to dawn).

If you take the correct precautions you can greatly reduce your risk of catching malaria.

How can I protect myself against malaria?

You can protect yourself against malaria, and you must do so every time you visit a country with malaria. This is very important, even if you grew up or lived there and are now returning to visit your friends or family.

No one has full immunity to malaria. Any protection you may have from being brought up in a malarious country is quickly lost when you live in countries with no malaria. Everyone needs to take precautions to avoid getting malaria.

Many cases of malaria can be avoided.

An easy way to remember is the ABCD approach to prevention:

Awareness of risk – find out whether you are at risk of getting malaria before travelling.

Bite prevention – avoid mosquito bites by using insect repellent such as DEET, covering your arms and legs, and using an insecticide-treated mosquito bed net.

Check whether you need to take malaria prevention medicines – if you do, make sure you take the right malaria prevention tablets at the right dose, and finish the course.

Diagnosis – seek immediate medical advice if you develop malaria symptoms, as long as up to a year after you return from travelling. Find out more information on malaria symptoms by visiting www.nhs.uk/Conditions/Malaria

A combination of the steps above will give significant protection against malaria.

How and where can I get malaria prevention medicines?

You can buy the following malaria prevention medicines over the counter from a community pharmacy. You don't need a prescription.

- chloroquine (Avloclor ®)
- proguanil (Paludrine ®)
- chloroquine with proguanil (Avloclor/Paludrine ®)
- atovaquone with proguanil (Maloff Protect ®)

Always speak to the pharmacist before buying the above malaria prevention medicines.

You will need to pay privately for the following malaria prevention medicines:

- atovaquone with proguanil hydrochloride (Malarone®, Mafamoz®, Reprapog®)
- doxycycline
- mefloquine (Larium®)

NHS Lambeth CCG no longer supports the routine prescribing of malaria prevention medicines on the NHS locally, for travel abroad. This will bring prescribing in the borough in line with national guidance

You can obtain a private prescription from your GP practice if they provide this service. Your GP practice may charge you a fee for providing a private prescription. The fee charged is up to the GP practice. Ask your GP practice for information on their fees.

You will then be charged by the community pharmacy for supply of the medicines.

If you get a private prescription, you can compare prices charged between community pharmacies, as these vary.

Alternatively, you can visit a private travel health clinic to obtain these malaria prevention medicines. Some community pharmacies also provide private travel health services. There will be a charge.