

Malaria

In first episode of our monsoon season, we will understand about very old, well-known disease to general public, transmitted by mosquitoes, MALARIA.

Something about Malaria:

Plasmodium is parasite (organisms who acquire their essential material for living from other living organism) that causes malaria disease and is transmitted through bite of female anopheles mosquito to humans. Anopheles mosquito stays in home as well as outside and lay their eggs in marshy or dirty water. Out of total 4 types of Plasmodium 2 are more common in India, P. Falciparum and P. Vivax. The parasite multiplies and stays in mosquito's body and during mosquito bite to human; this parasite enters in human body. Then it enters liver through blood, multiplies further and gets released in blood and enters in red blood cells. Again it multiplies in red blood cells and gets released in blood again after killing red blood cell and infects other red blood cells.

Symptoms of Malaria:

As we know something about malaria, if anopheles mosquitoes are breeding nearby, one is predisposed to acquire malaria. By chance one had a female anopheles mosquito bite and one start having prodromal symptoms like headache, fatigue, anorexia, myalgia, slight fever, and pain in the chest, abdomen, or joints within 7-14 days of mosquito bite, it is likely to be malarial parasite in blood. The symptoms of malaria are typical but non-specific, it consists of paroxysms of fever alternating with periods of fatigue but otherwise relative wellness. Symptoms associated with febrile paroxysms include high fever, rigors, sweats, and headache, as well as myalgia, back pain, abdominal pain, nausea, vomiting, diarrhoea, pallor, and jaundice.

What next if one have it:

In case one has the above symptomatology, he/she should see the physician/pediatrician as soon as possible. Let doctor assess and decide whether it is Malaria or other infective disease. One has to get it treated; there is no way it can get cure on its own. Malaria has high rate of complications e.g.

Malaria in brain (cerebral malaria), Kidney failure (Acute Renal failure), Breathing problem, bleeding from lungs and mouth (ARDS), bleeding from anywhere in body due to low platelet (thrombocytopenia), heart failure (CCF due to low blood- anemia), etc. and may require hospitalization. The prevalence of complicated malaria varies from region to region from 8% to 30%.

How can one stay away of Malaria:

Can try, following Strategies-

- 1 Can use mosquito repellent roll-on/ patch/ cream application while moving out of house.
- 2 One can use mosquito repellent coil (preferable) or repellent liquid (more toxic compared to coil smoke).
- 3 Put mosquito net to either all windows and/or beds.
- 4 Remove maximum breeding places for mosquito near you and your surroundings.

5 If you cannot remove any breeding place, put soap water in it, it decreases surface tension of water and make it difficult for malarial larvae(precursor state of mosquito) to survive.

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