

MALARIA IS A TREATABLE DISEASE - DR. GAYANA GUNARATNA

BY DESHAN WIJAYANTHA

This article is based on an interview conducted with Dr. Gayana Gunaratna of the Department of Medical Microbiology, University of Kelaniya regarding World Malaria Day, which falls on 25 April.

What kind of disease is Malaria?

A: Malaria is a well-known disease for most of us and it is a parasitic infection that is transmitted by mosquitoes. The causative agents of malaria are unicellular protozoan parasites belonging to the genus *Plasmodium*.

As we are aware, malaria is a treatable disease. The severity changes from mild to severe, life-threatening disease. The parasite affects almost all the organs and the systems of the body. Unfortunately, if the diagnosis is delayed, and the appropriate treatment is not given on time, it can result in various complications and may even lead to death.

How is malaria transmitted?

A: Malaria is acquired following a bite of an infected female Anopheles mosquito. The principal vector, *Anopheles culicifacies*, is present mainly in the dry and intermediate zones of the country.

There are other infrequent ways through which one can acquire malaria. For example, with blood transfusions. The risk of getting malaria following a blood transfusion is minimal as, all the blood that we donate, is screened thoroughly before transfusion. Malaria is also rarely transmitted to a baby from an infected pregnant mother and it is also transmitted with organ transplants.

What are the symptoms of this disease?

A: It is important for us to know about the symptoms of malaria. The symptoms displayed by patients with malaria are not unique to the infection. The symptoms that one can develop at the beginning are fever, chills, body aches, general weakness, vomiting, headaches and stomachache.

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When the disease progresses, the patient develops symptoms owing to the complications of the disease

will direct you to get the tests for malaria completed free-of-charge.

There are different tests available to diagnose malaria. The most commonly used test looks for the presence of malaria parasites in your blood. Facilities for this test are available in most hospitals. Also, malaria antigen detection tests can be performed. Your doctor will decide which test is suitable for you.

Molecular tests are also available, but those are mainly for research and epidemiological studies.

Who is at risk of malaria?

A: The majority of us are non-immune to malaria, as we have not been exposed to the parasite earlier. Therefore, any one of us is at risk of getting malaria, if an infected mosquito bites us, but young children and pregnant females have a higher risk of getting severe and complicated disease.

The risk groups for malaria include those who go on pilgrimages and those who travel to countries where malaria is prevalent for different purposes such as occupational commitments, adventure tours and vacations. The official web page of the Anti-Malaria Campaign provides a list of all the countries with the risk of transmitting malaria.

How important is it to identify patients and get proper treatment?

A: That's another very important question. It is important for one to seek medical care early, as early diagnosis and timely commencement of treatment can prevent many complications of the disease. As local transmission is non-apparent, it is vital to undergo treatment for the disease as soon as possible to prevent the disease from spreading in the community. This is because vector mosquitoes are still prevalent in the environment and if infected people remain to be present in the community, the mosquitoes can get infected while obtaining their blood meals, and transmit malaria to others in the community. This can eventually lead to the re-establishment of malaria in Sri Lanka.

How to get malaria tests done?

A: If you feel unwell following travel to a malaria-endemic country, please seek medical care immediately, and tell your doctor about your travel history in addition to your symptoms. Your doctor

Through the various activities conducted by the Anti-Malaria Campaign (AMC), in 1963, a chance to eradicate malaria from the country presented itself. The country reported less than 20 cases. Then a surge of malaria cases was detected in the country, most probably due to undetected foci of malaria transmission, the increased number of local and international travels of Sri Lankans, and the decreased intensity of control activities against malaria. Now AMC and health authorities are taking all the possible steps to prevent the re-establishment of malaria, especially cautiously after the above-mentioned past incidents. After all, history can repeat itself and we need to take all possible measures to prevent it.

As responsible people in the community, we must all play our roles to help the ongoing control activities for malaria. The precautionary steps for malaria include seeking advice from AMC prior to traveling to a country where malaria is endemic and taking precautions to avoid getting bitten by mosquitoes. Most importantly we must comply with the prophylaxis and treatment given for malaria.

PUBLIC NOTICE

In pursuant of sec 94 of Companies Act No.7 of 2007, an application has been made to the Registrar of Companies for a license directing an association about to be formed under the Name and style of "Saubhaya Poverty Alleviation Development Foundation" to be registered with limited liability without the addition of limited to its name.

Objects

- To eradicate rural poverty, eliminating malnutrition, increasing literacy, uplifting the rural economy by using existing resources in the production process with high efficiency using new technology.
- To promote & encourage thrifty methods and saving methods for the sake of the social community and their economic stability.
- To implement and maintaining the introduction of social security programs, implementing appropriate programs to strengthen the members memory, and uplifting the national economy through economic, social and cultural empowerment of the community.

Notice is hereby given that any person or corporation objecting to this, a letter should be forwarded to the Registrar, Department of Registrar of Companies, No.400, D. R. Wijeyewardene Mawatha, Colombo 10, within 03 weeks from today.

Secretary

Union Bank of Colombo PLC

NOTICE OF RESOLUTION PASSED BY THE UNION BANK OF COLOMBO PLC UNDER SECTION 04 OF THE RECOVERY OF LOANS BY BANKS [SPECIAL PROVISIONS] ACT NO. 4 OF 1990.

In terms of Section 6 of the Recovery of Loans by Banks (Special Provisions) Act No. 4 of 1990, it is hereby notified that the following resolution was unanimously passed by the Board of Directors of Union Bank of Colombo PLC (hereinafter referred to as "Union Bank") at the held on 22nd March, 2024.

WHEREAS being Directors of Union Bank of Colombo PLC (hereinafter referred to as "Union Bank") having its registered office at 100, Galle Road, Colombo 01, hereinafter referred to as "Union Bank" Series Loan Facility and Secondary Primary Mortgage Bond No.183, dated 22.11.2015, for the value of Rs.10,000,00/- effected by L.G.N. Sanjeewa Ratnayake Public and Secondary Mortgage Bond No.188 dated 27.04.2018 for the value of Rs.2,000,00/- effected by K.P. Jayawardena Public and Secondary Mortgage Bond No.189 dated 27.04.2018 for the value of Rs.1,000,00/- effected by L.G.N. Sanjeewa Ratnayake Public and Secondary Mortgage Bond No.190 dated 27.04.2018 for the value of Rs.1,000,00/- effected by L.G.N. Sanjeewa Ratnayake Public and Secondary Mortgage Bond No.191 dated 27.04.2018 for the value of Rs.1,000,00/- effected by L.G.N. Sanjeewa Ratnayake Public and Secondary Mortgage Bond No.192 dated 27.04.2018 for the value of Rs.1,000,00/- effected by L.G.N. 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