

# EPIDEMIOLOGICAL BULLETIN

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## World Malaria Day 2022:

Since 2008, World Malaria Day has been celebrated to raise awareness about malaria and how to eradicate this disease from the earth.

WHO joins partner organizations in promoting this year's World Malaria Day theme, **Ready to beat malaria**. This theme underscores the collective energy and commitment of the global malaria community in uniting around the common goal of a world free of malaria.

Malaria is a life-threatening disease transmitted via the bite of female Anopheles mosquitoes infected by the malaria causing plasmodium parasite.

About half of the world's population is at risk of malaria, primarily in poor countries. The deadly disease infects more than 200 million people across the world each year and is very much preventable and curable.

World Malaria Day is celebrated every year on April 25th and global organizations like the World Health Organization (WHO), the United Nations' (UN) management and regulating authority for global health, play an important role in promoting the awareness about the disease.

Malaria is an acute febrile illness caused by Plasmodium parasites, which are spread to people through the bites of infected female Anopheles mosquitoes. There are 5 parasite species that cause malaria in humans, and 2 of these species – P. falciparum and P. vivax – pose the greatest threat. P. falciparum is the deadliest malaria parasite and the most prevalent on the African continent. P. vivax is the dominant malaria parasite in most countries outside of sub-Saharan Africa.

The first symptoms – fever, headache and chills – usually appear 10–15 days after the infective mosquito bite and may be mild and difficult to recognize as malaria. Left untreated, P. falciparum malaria can progress to severe illness and death within a period of 24 hours.

Over the last 2 decades, expanded access to WHO-recommended malaria prevention tools and strategies – including effective vector control and the use of preventive antimalarial drugs – has had a major impact in reducing the global burden of this disease.

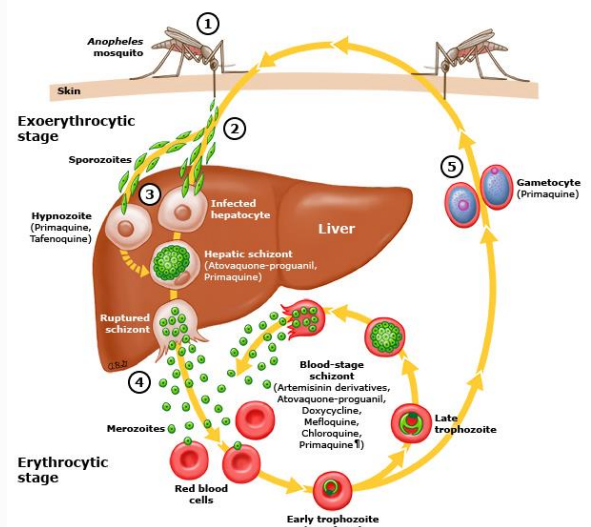
The best available treatment, particularly for P. falciparum malaria, is artemisinin-based combination therapy (ACT). The primary objective of treatment is to ensure the rapid and full elimination of Plasmodium parasites from a patient's bloodstream to prevent an uncomplicated case of malaria from progressing to severe disease or death.



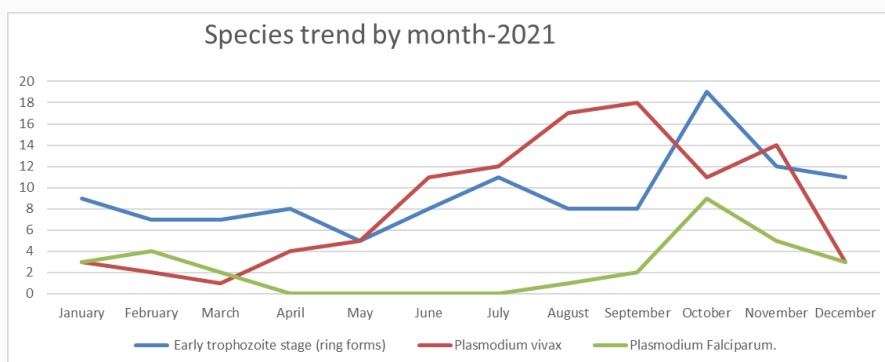
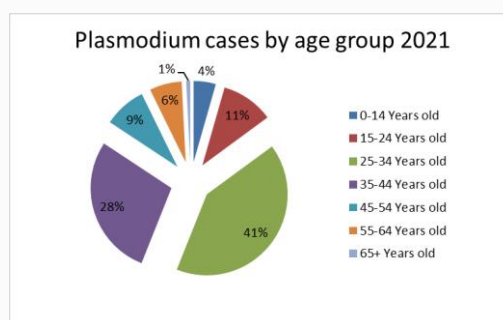
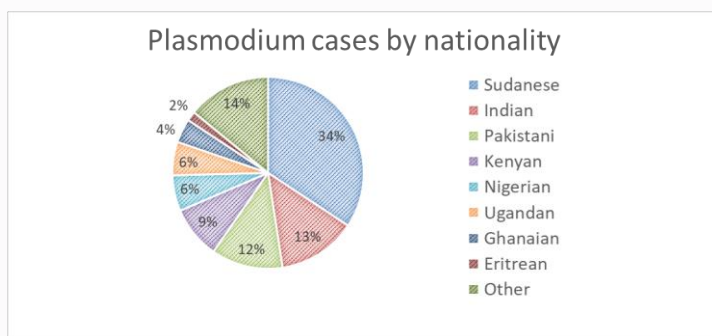
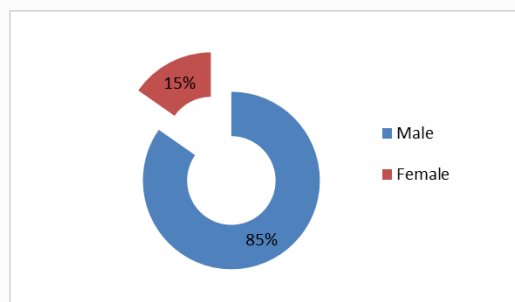
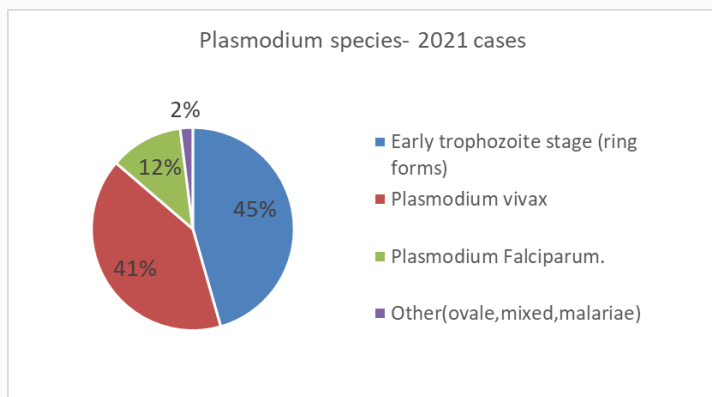
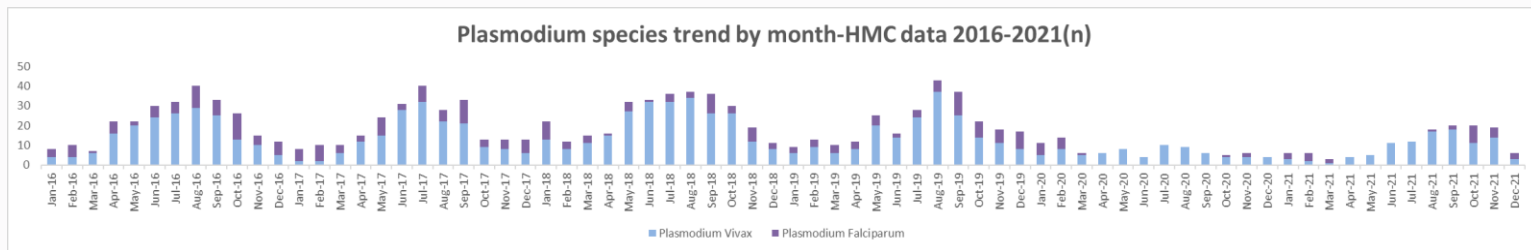
### Key facts

- ✓ *Malaria is a life-threatening disease caused by parasites that are transmitted to people through the bites of infected female Anopheles mosquitoes. It is preventable and curable.*
- ✓ *In 2020, there were an estimated 241 million cases of malaria worldwide.*
- ✓ *The estimated number of malaria deaths stood at 627 000 in 2020.*
- ✓ *The WHO African Region carries a disproportionately high share of the global malaria burden. In 2020, the region was home to 95% of malaria cases and 96% of malaria deaths. Children under 5 accounted for an estimated 80% of all malaria deaths in the Region.*
- ✓ *Some population groups are at considerably higher risk of contracting malaria and developing severe disease: infants, children under 5 years of age, pregnant women and patients with HIV/AIDS, as well as people with low immunity moving to areas with intense malaria transmission such as migrant workers, mobile populations and travelers.*

### Life cycle of Plasmodium



## Imported Malaria cases - HMC 2021



### Epidemiology of Malaria in Qatar

Most of the Middle East Region countries are malaria-free as no indigenous cases of infection have been described in recent years. An earlier study carried out in the last decade showed that the incidence of malaria which had progressively declined from 58.6 cases/100,000 population in 1997 to 9.5 cases/100,000 population in 2004, started to increase from 2005 onward. The increasing incidence was related with travel of expatriate workers to their native, malaria-endemic countries including India, Pakistan, and Sudan and all patients were imported malaria cases. This trend was confirmed by a subsequent study which also showed an increasing trend in reported cases from 2008 to 2015 and almost all malaria cases were identified among non-Qatari (99.6%) male (93%) expatriate subjects while malaria cases among Qatari nationals were seen among returning travelers. (Ref: Al-Awadhi, M.; Ahmad, S.; Iqbal, J. Current Status and the Epidemiology of Malaria in the Middle East Region and Beyond. Microorganisms 2021)