Update: Malaria in Kingston, Jamaica: Recommendations for Travelers

This information [from the CDC] is current as of today, 8 Feb 2007 09:29:41 PM. According to the Jamaica Ministry of Health (MOH) and the Caribbean Epidemiology Center (CAREC) report of 30 Jan 2007, the outbreak of malaria in Kingston, Jamaica is ongoing. The most recent reported date of onset of illness was 23 Jan 2007. All confirmed infections have been caused by _Plasmodium falciparum_.

Jamaica is a country where malaria is not considered endemic, where malaria transmission does not normally occur, and where CDC has not previously recommended antimalarial prophylactic drugs for U.S. travelers.

The Ministry of Health in Jamaica has responded with heightened surveillance for malaria cases, mosquito control measures (larviciding and spraying), and education of the local population. CAREC and the Pan American Health Organization/World Health Organization are assisting the Ministry of Health with these response measures. CDC is assisting the Ministry of Health by augmenting their laboratory diagnostic capacity.


Antimalarial Medication:

Since 4 Dec 2006, CDC has recommended prophylactic (preventive) antimalarial medication for travelers who stay overnight in Kingston, Jamaica only. Travelers to other areas of the island do not need to take an antimalarial drug. This recommendation is expected to be temporary. Travelers should periodically check the CDC Travelers' Health website for updates. Chloroquine, which is the recommended
antimalarial chemoprophylaxis drug for Jamaica, has a long history of use and safety and is well tolerated by most people, including children. People with an allergy to chloroquine should discuss an alternative antimalarial drug with their health-care provider. To learn more about chloroquine, including dosing information, see Information for the Public: Prescription Drugs for Malaria.

--
ProMED-mail
<promed@promedmail.org>

[This notice contains no data on the number of new cases, but the phrase "the outbreak of malaria in Kingston, Jamaica is ongoing" implies that new cases have continued to appear since our last posting on 23 Jan 2007. According to the Ministry of Health website, an undated message says that "the number of new confirmed cases is trending downwards, with an average of 2 cases recorded per day since 21 Dec 2006." ProMED looks forward to seeing weekly numbers of new cases to ensure that the outbreak is under control. - Mod.EP]