

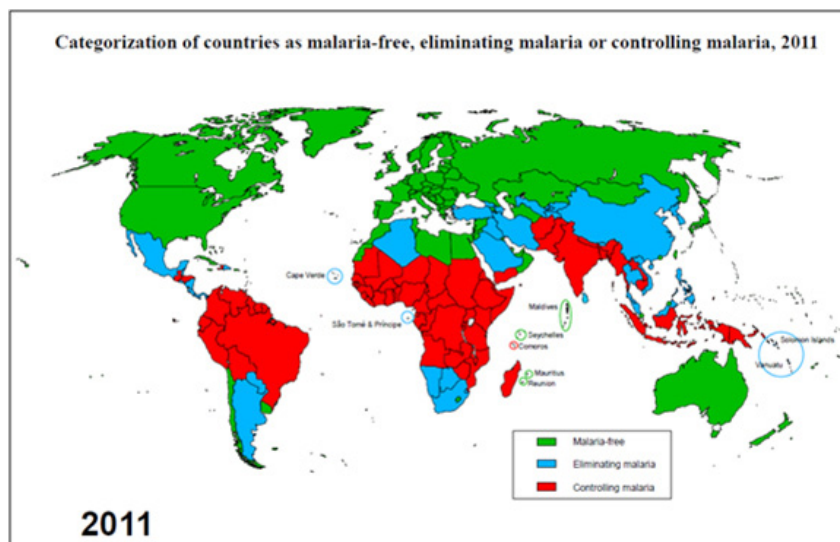
LOOKOUT

Precautionary measures against malaria infection

Category: Safety
Date: 12/09/2012
Area: Worldwide

Recently a crew member on board one of our Member's vessels contracted malaria while the vessel was operating off the West African coast. The crew member was evacuated to a local hospital but died soon after despite medical treatment. Investigation revealed that this situation could have been managed more effectively if adequate medical stores had been maintained on board and appropriate precautions exercised.

Malaria is a life-threatening disease caused by parasites that are transmitted to humans through the bites of infected mosquitoes. Most malaria cases and deaths occur in sub-Saharan Africa, and Asia, Latin America, Middle East, and parts of Europe are also affected to a lesser extent. It is important to note that all age groups are at risk although it affects young children most in certain areas. Currently there are no licensed vaccines against malaria or any other human parasite but adequate preventive measures could be effective.



Members are recommended to be aware of the situation in the areas in which their vessels operate, and to assess the changing risks and facilitate implementation of the necessary preventive measures, including providing adequate medical supplies on board:

- Evaluate the risk in the areas where a vessel is intended to be operated considering the length of stay, malaria season, climate, etc. keeping the crew members on board informed, provide adequate medical supplies including anti-malarial drugs prior to entering malaria infested area
- Crew members to exercise adequate precautions include taking anti-malarial drugs, wearing protective clothing, applying effective repellents regularly, minimising time spent outdoors, etc. while the vessel is operating in malaria infested areas
- Seek immediate medical advice if malaria or dengue is suspected on board and arrange for medical evacuation if the patient's condition does not improve despite on board treatment.

Source of information: <http://www.who.int/topics/malaria/en/>