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Malaria (Plasmodium spp.) 1995 Case Definition | CDC  
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Malaria (  
Plasmodium  
spp.)  
1995 Case Definition  
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Plasmodium  
spp.)  
1995 Case Definition  
NOTE:  
A surveillance case definition is a set of uniform criteria used to define a disease for public health surveillance. Surveillance case definitions enable public health officials to classify and count cases consistently across reporting jurisdictions. Surveillance case definitions are not intended to be used by healthcare providers for making a clinical diagnosis or determining how to meet an individual patient’s health needs.  
Clinical Description  
Signs and symptoms are variable; however, most patients experience fever. In addition to fever, common associated symptoms include headache, back pain, chills, sweats, myalgia, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, and cough. Untreated  
Plasmodium falciparum  
infection can lead to coma, renal failure, pulmonary edema, and death. The diagnosis of malaria should be considered for any person who has these symptoms and who has traveled to an area in which malaria is endemic. Asymptomatic parasitemia can occur among persons who have been long-term residents of areas in which malaria is endemic.  
Laboratory Criteria For Diagnosis  
Demonstration of malaria parasites in blood films  
Case Classification  
Confirmed  
An episode of microscopically confirmed malaria parasitemia in any person (symptomatic or asymptomatic) diagnosed in the United States, regardless of whether the person experienced previous episodes of malaria while outside the country.  
Comments  
A subsequent attack experienced by the same person but caused by a different  
Plasmodium  
species is counted as an additional case. A subsequent attack experienced by the same person and caused by the same species in the United States may indicate a relapsing infection or treatment failure caused by drug resistance.  
Blood smears from questionable cases should be referred to the National Malaria Repository, CDC, for confirmation of the diagnosis.  
Cases also are classified according to the following World Health Organization categories:  
Autochthonous  
:  
Indigenous  
: malaria acquired by mosquito transmission in an area where malaria is a regular occurrence  
Introduced  
: malaria acquired by mosquito transmission from an imported case in an area where malaria is not a regular occurrence  
Imported  
: malaria acquired outside a specific area (e.g., the United States and its territories)  
Induced  
: malaria acquired through artificial means (e.g., blood transfusion, common syringes, or malariotherapy)  
Relapsing  
: renewed manifestation (i.e., of clinical symptoms and/or parasitemia) of malarial infection that is separated from previous manifestations of the same infection by an interval greater than any interval resulting from the normal periodicity of the paroxysms  
Cryptic  
: an isolated case of malaria that cannot be epidemiologically linked to additional cases  
The 1995 case definition appearing on this page was re-published in the 1997  
MMWR  
Recommendations and Reports titled  
Case Definitions for Infectious Conditions Under Public Health Surveillance  
.  
1  
Thus, the 1995 and 1997 versions of this case definition are identical.  
References  
CDC. (1997). Case Definitions for Infectious Conditions Under Public Health Surveillance.  
MMWR  
, 46(RR-10), 1-55.  
https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/00047449.htm  
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NNDSS receives and shares case data from state, local, and territorial health departments to help public health monitor, control, and prevent serious diseases.  
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