A WORLD WITHOUT MALARIA

Malaria in Pregnancy

Malaria is more dangerous for a pregnant woman and her baby. Simple steps protect them both.

? Why is pregnancy a risk?

When a woman is pregnant, her body is less able to fight malaria. Mosquitoes also bite pregnant women more often.

The parasite can hide in the placenta (the part that feeds the baby). A mother can feel well but still have malaria that hurts her baby.

! What malaria can do

- Weak blood (anaemia) in the mother
- Losing the baby (miscarriage)
- A baby born too early or too small
- Serious sickness or death for the mother

✓ Protect mother and baby

- Sleep under a treated mosquito net every night.
- Go to the clinic early in the pregnancy, and go to every visit.
- In many countries, the clinic gives medicine to prevent malaria from the middle of pregnancy. Take it at each visit, as the health worker says.
- Eat well. Take the iron and folic acid tablets the clinic gives you.

+ If she gets a fever

A fever in pregnancy is an emergency.

- Get a malaria test straight away.
- Get medicine only from a health worker. Some medicines are not safe in the first months of pregnancy.
- Do not buy medicine from the market.

♥ After the baby is born

Keep mother and baby under a net. Watch the baby for fever. Take the baby for all clinic visits.

▶ Learn more

Watch Episode 11, **Malaria, Pregnant Women and Unborn Children**, from our free cartoon series *A World Without Malaria*.

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This guide gives general information only. Always follow a health worker's advice.

Sources: WHO Malaria fact sheet (December 2025); WHO Guidelines for malaria (2025); A World Without Malaria study guide, chapter 11. © Buzz Off, a project of Australian Mercy (ABN 84 008 643 258). Free to copy and share.