



GAUTENG PROVINCE
HEALTH
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

MEDIA STATEMENT

WEDNESDAY, 4 NOVEMBER 2020

PROTECT YOURSELF AND THOSE CLOSE TO YOU AGAINST MALARIA DISEASE

As the year winds down many Gauteng residents will be visiting far flung places to spend time with loved ones and family. The Gauteng Department of Health (GDoH) wishes to warn the public to be vigilant as they visit places that are malaria endemic.

Malaria is a life-threatening disease caused by parasites that are transmitted to people through the bites of infected female mosquitoes. Even though the Gauteng province is not a malaria endemic area, it continues to see and attend to malaria cases throughout out the year.

The Gauteng province sees on the average between 2000 to 3000 malaria cases every year, whilst the number of malaria related fatalities hovers between 20 to 30 deaths yearly in the province.

The Southern African Development Community (SADC) observes Malaria Week annually on 2-6 November. The majority of these cases come from malaria endemic countries and regions such as Mozambique, Zimbabwe, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Malawi, the Limpopo and Mpumalanga provinces.

The main concern for the GDoH is that most patients with malaria present very late into health facilities with severe complications.

If you have any of the following symptoms after visiting a malaria endemic region: fever; headache, general body aches and pains or body weakness, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea or flu symptoms visit your nearest healthcare facility or doctor.

To prevent contracting malaria disease, adhere to following advice and principles:

- When travelling to malaria endemic areas, try to avoid the bites of mosquitoes by using mosquito repellents.
- Where possible, sleep in air condition room or have fan in the room. Mosquitoes dislike cool and air conditioned rooms and environments.
- Sleep under mosquito nets and wear clothing that cover legs and arms. Mosquitoes prefer to bite these parts of the body.
- Whenever possible avoid going out in the late afternoon or at night. Stay indoors between dusk and dawn (between 5pm and 5am).
- Get medications from the pharmacy that help prevent contracting of Malaria disease. These medications kill these parasites in the body, this may take hours or even days.
- Avoid traveling to malaria endemic areas if you are one of those at risk of a severe form of the disease; e.g. pregnant, children under 5 years of age or are immunocompromised in any way.

Sub-Saharan Africa carries a disproportionately high share of the global malaria burden. In 2015, the region was home to 89% of malaria cases and 91% of malaria deaths.

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Issued by Gauteng Department of Health

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