

# OUR CHILDREN'S HEALTH IS IN OUR HANDS

## LET'S PROTECT THEM FROM MALARIA!

*“Protect children in places where malaria is endemic; and ensure that children sleep under insecticide treated nets”*



Family and Community Health/Project of Newborn, Child and Youth Health (FCH/CH)  
Health Surveillance and Disease Prevention and Control / Prevention and Control of Communicable Diseases (HSD/CD)



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The Pan American Health Organization estimates that there are 1 million people in the Americas suffering from malaria each year. One hundred thousand of them are children under the age of five and oftentimes, the majority of their mothers are also infected.

These children can suffer from low birth weight, anemia, epilepsy, and learning difficulties; and may die if not given proper medical attention.

No child or family should experience this tragedy as malaria is a preventable and treatable disease.



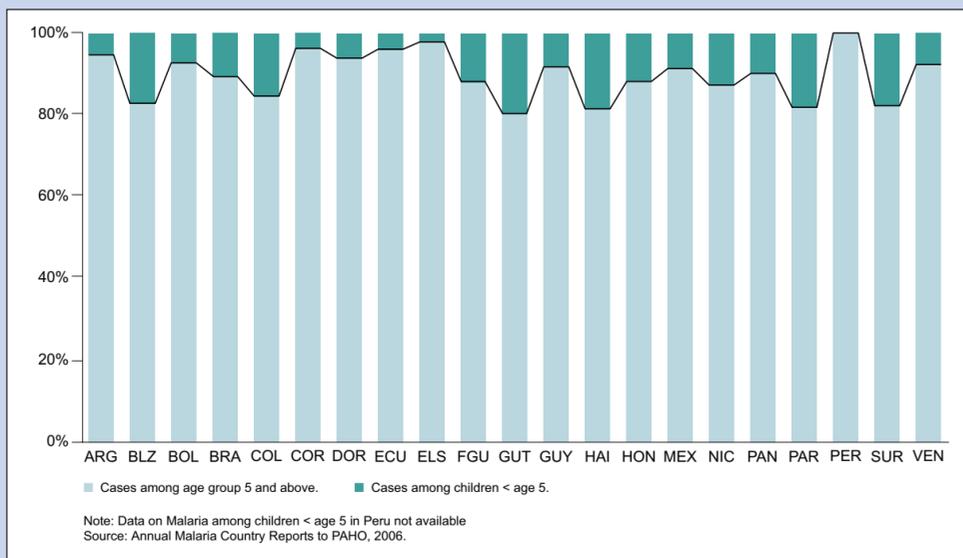
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525 Twenty-third Street, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20037

[www.paho.org](http://www.paho.org)



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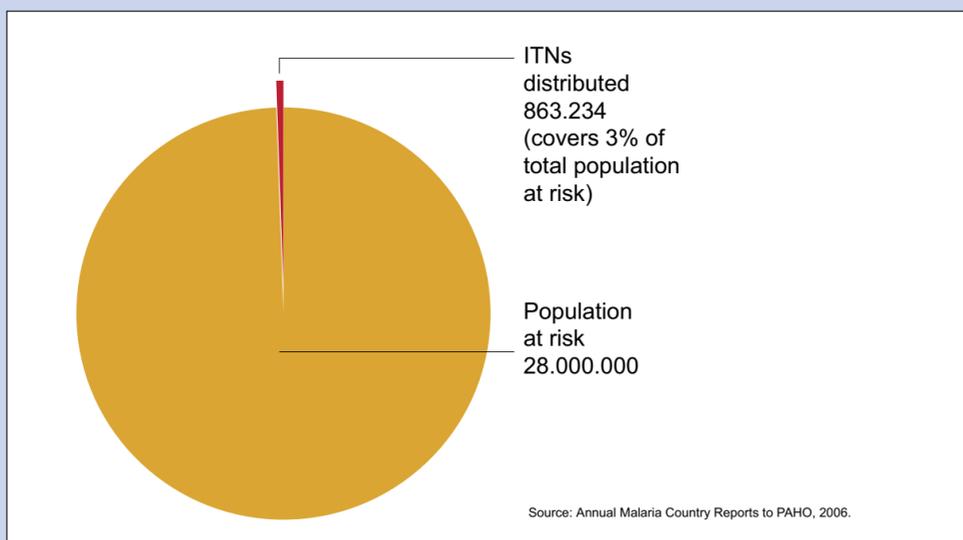
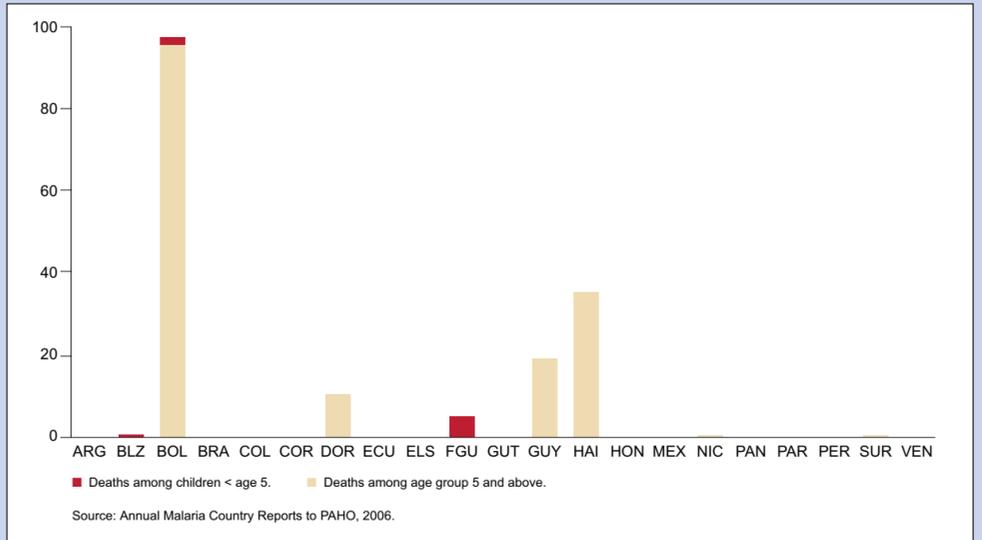


### Malaria cases among children under the age of five in malaria endemic countries in the Americas, 2006 (in Percentage)

One out of 5 symptomatic malaria patients in the Region is a child less than the age of 5. Oftentimes, the child's mother is also infected. Among the countries that reported the greatest proportions of malaria among children are Belize, Colombia, Guatemala, Haiti, Paraguay, and Suriname.

### Malaria mortality among children under the age of five in malaria endemic countries in the Americas, 2006

Despite advances in treatment and the availability of effective preventive measures, people still die of malaria in the Americas. Deaths among children were reported in Belize, Brazil, French Guiana, and Guyana. These are among the countries (also includes Bolivia, Colombia, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Haiti, Peru, Suriname, and Venezuela) where *Plasmodium falciparum*, the most pathogenic malaria parasite, is most commonly found.

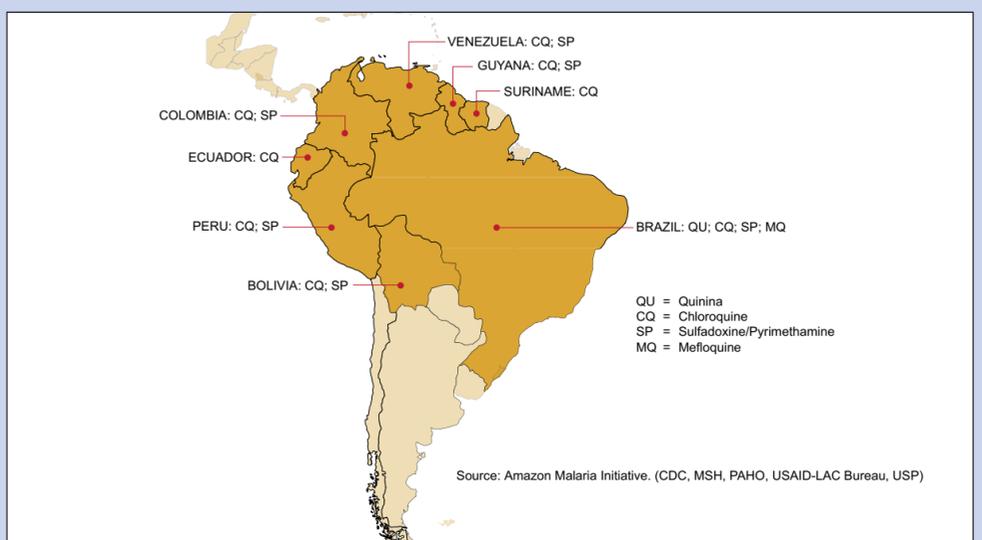


### Insecticide Treated Nets (ITNs) Distributed vs. Estimated Total Population at Risk in the Americas (as of 2006)

Approximately 28 million people are reported to be at high risk of the disease in the Region and are recommended as priority in using ITNs for malaria prevention. So far, reports indicate that only 863,234 bed nets have been distributed since 2004 which means an overall coverage of only 3%

### Anti-malarial Drug Resistance in the Americas

*Plasmodium falciparum* resistance to various commonly used anti-malarial drugs has been confirmed in 8 South American countries. Treatment policies in these nations have been revised towards the use of Artemisinin-based combination therapies (ACTs). As recommended by the World Health Organization, the new treatment must be followed strictly to help prevent development of resistance to these newer medications.



## IMCI Integrated Management of Childhood Illness within the Continuum of Maternal, Newborn, and Child Health

### We all have a role to play in preventing and controlling malaria

#### For everyone who are in areas at risk:

- ❖ Ensure that the entire family, especially children under the age of 5, are protected from mosquito bites by sleeping under ITNs
- ❖ A child who develops fever and is suspected to have malaria must seek prompt and accurate diagnosis from the nearest health post; and must complete the appropriate treatment regime if found infected with the disease
- ❖ Use other preventive measures as appropriate:
- ❖ Indoor Residual Spraying (IRS) by trained personnel may be used to kill mosquitoes. However, cleaning of walls renders IRS ineffective as the active substance is washed off

- ❖ Good-quality mosquito repellents and protective clothing (e.g. long-sleeved shirts, pants and socks); use of metallic screens among doors and windows; and draining of mosquito breeding sites (e.g. ponds, water containers, etc.) also provide protection

#### For people who work in health:

- ❖ Ensure availability, accessibility, and affordability of prompt, good-quality, and appropriate malaria prevention interventions, diagnosis and treatment to the community at all times
- ❖ This involves, among others:
- ❖ Ensuring essential supplies for malaria prevention, diagnosis, and

treatment timely reach communities and are appropriately used by peoples at risk

- ❖ Ensuring diagnostic and treatment guidelines are followed strictly by health providers and patients

#### For all of us:

- ❖ Become advocates for the fight against malaria
- ❖ Share this message with your family and friends; and actively engage your community and leaders towards better health for children, women, and all.

