

INFORMATION ON PRIMAQUINE®

You will be spending part of your trip in an area where chloroquine-resistant malaria is widespread. Malaria is an important cause of disease and death abroad. It is a blood infection caused by a parasite called *Plasmodium*, which is transmitted by a mosquito bite.



Malaria can be prevented by taking medication regularly. However, since no drug is 100% effective, it is important to protect yourself against mosquito bites: use an insect repellent containing DEET, sleep under mosquito netting (preferably impregnated with permethrin), avoid perfumes, wear pale colored clothes that cover most of the body, and avoid going out in the evenings and at night. These measures are just as important as taking medicines.

Before prescribing primaquine, your physician has ruled out glucose-6-phosphate dehydrogenase (G6PD) deficiency by an appropriate blood test. G6PD is an enzyme implicated in glucose metabolism. Primaquine should not be used during pregnancy.

Primaquine is recommended in the following dosage:

Adults : 2 tablets daily (each 26,3 mg tablet is equivalent to 15 mg base)

Children: 0,5 mg / kg daily

Start taking the medication on the day before departure and continue preventive treatment during your trip and for 7 days after leaving the region where malaria can be transmitted.

This medication is best taken with food.

Side effects

Most travelers have no side effects. Occasionally, stomach aches, nausea, vomiting or loss of appetite can occur. Those gastrointestinal side effects can be alleviated if primaquine is taken with food. Very rarely, more serious side effects may occur, such as high blood pressure, low white cell count or cardiac arrhythmia. Primaquine can cause severe anemia in G6PD-deficient persons.

In case of fever

Despite taking preventive medication, fever that occurs when traveling or in the months after your return may be a sign of malaria. See a doctor immediately and tell him or her about your recent travel to a tropical area.

Source : INSPQ

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