

World Malaria Day

# Invest in the future, defeat malaria

Global efforts to control and eliminate malaria have saved an estimated 3.3 million lives since 2000, reducing malaria mortality rates by 42% globally and 49% in Africa. Increased political commitment and expanded funding have helped to reduce malaria incidence by 25% globally, and 31% in Africa.

But we are not there yet. Malaria still kills an estimated 6,27,000 people every year, mainly children under 5 years of age in sub-Saharan Africa. In 2013, 97 countries had on-going malaria transmission.

Every year, more than 200 million cases occur; most of these cases are never tested or registered. Emerging drug and insecticide resistance threaten to reverse recent gains.

If the world is to maintain and accelerate progress against malaria, in line with Millennium Development Goal (MDG) 6, and to ensure attainment of MDGs 4 and 5, more funds are urgently required. With this importance, the theme for 2014 and 2015 is: Invest in the future. Defeat malaria.

However, the funding remains inadequate. The currently available funding is far below the resources required to reach universal coverage of interventions. An estimated US\$ 5.1



billion is needed every year for this purpose. In 2012, the global total of international and domestic funding for malaria was US\$ 2.5 billion — less than half of what is needed.

52 countries are on track to reduce their malaria case incidence rates by 75%, in line with World Health Assembly and Roll Back Malaria targets for 2015. These 52 countries only

account for 4% (8 million) of the total estimated malaria cases. 59 countries are on track to meet the Millennium Development Goal target of reversing the incidence of malaria (between 2000 and 2015).

For prevention of malaria, controlling mosquito that harbors the parasite is the main way to reduce malaria transmission at the community level. It is the only

intervention that can reduce malaria transmission from very high levels to close to zero. For individuals, personal protection against mosquito bites represents the first line of defence for malaria prevention. Two forms of vector control are effective in a wide range of circumstances-Insecticide-treated mosquito nets (ITNs) and Indoor spraying with residual insecticides.

Long-lasting insecticidal nets (LLINs) are the preferred form of ITNs for public health distribution programmes. The World Health Organisation (WHO) recommends coverage for all at-risk persons; and in most settings. The most cost effective way to achieve this is through provision of free LLINs, so that everyone sleeps under a LLIN every night.

Indoor residual spraying (IRS) with insecticides is a powerful way to rapidly reduce malaria transmission. Its full potential is realised when at least 80% of houses in targeted areas are sprayed. Indoor spraying is effective for 3–6 months, depending on the insecticide used and the type of surface on which it is sprayed. DDT can be effective for 9–12 months in some cases. Longer-lasting forms of existing IRS insecticides, as well as new classes of insecticides for use in IRS programmes, are under development.

Antimalarial medicines can also be used to prevent malaria. For travellers, malaria can be prevented through chemoprophylaxis, which suppresses the blood stage of malaria infections, thereby preventing malaria disease.

Source: World Health Organisation

## HOME CARE

### Managing food poisoning

PROF M KARIM KHAN

Safwan, a 6 years old boy came to me after celebration of Bangla New Year, he came to me with acute diarrhoea, vomiting, fever and muscle cramp. His younger sister and parents also developed similar symptoms. On query he told me that he took panta, dry hilsha fry and other items as a part of celebration of new year the previous last night and following which his tummy was not behaving well. This is a typical scenario of food poisoning.

Definition of food poisoning is an acute gastrointestinal condition characterised by symptoms as headache, fever, chills, abdominal and muscular pain, nausea, vomiting, diarrhoea and prostration caused by contaminated foods and water. It usually occurs in a group of people who consume the food together.

Consumption of germs and chemical contaminated food and water typically cause food poisoning. Samonella, staphylococci, E. coli, shigella, campylobacter jejuni, rotavirus and some parasites may cause food poisoning. Contaminated meat, poultry, eggs, dairy products, sea food, unwashed fruits and vegetables etc. are claimed to be the culprit. Contaminated water and drinks are also equally responsible.

Symptoms and signs are not very serious — occasional hospitalisation are needed. But proper home care is very important to tackle the episodes. Start drinking oral rehydration saline (ORS), green coconut water and plain water plenty as soon as the symptoms starts. Antibiotics are rarely needed but sometimes anti emetic may be needed. If dehydration and electrolyte imbalance occurs, hospitalisation is advised.

To prevent such problem proper food and health hygiene to be maintained.

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## HEALTH bulletin



### Married people may be likelier to survive cancer

Researchers found a strong tie between tying the knot and clearing cancer. Married cancer patients are less likely to die of their disease than those who aren't wed, a new study published in the Journal of Clinical Oncology suggests.

### Big cigarette tax hikes might prevent 200m deaths in a century

Tripling cigarette taxes around the world — an ambitious notion — would prevent 200 million people from dying prematurely over a century and shrink the number of smokers worldwide by one-third, a new review published in the New England Journal of Medicine estimates.

## Increase tobacco price for health safety

STAR HEALTH DESK

Scorching heat, sweats trickling down from the forehead and he is literally gasping. Standing beside the roadside tea-cigarette stall, rickshaw puller Alom Mia orders a bread and banana. Galloping them hurriedly, he takes a pause and after a while orders for a cigarette. Flashing the lighter, he soaks the feelings inside him and a smiling note reveals in his face. It seems at last he has taken something for having a happy-heart. What he is consuming everyday that gives Alom mia and many like him relief? Well, that is known to all, tobacco. But is it so relieving?

Alom Mia admits honestly that smoking is *bad* for health. But he never knows how far bad it is for him or for the persons who are exposed to his smoking habits.

What types of cigarettes Alom Mias are buying from the street cigarette sellers? The simplest response of it is they are buying cheap cigarettes. Well, those are made from low quality tobacco, sub-standard filters and so on. According to a report, some 66% of the total cigarette market in Bangladesh belongs to the low standard cheap cigarettes. The report did not include the bidi and other tobacco products, presumably more hazardous to health. So the total volume of sub standard tobacco consumption



amassed to a mammoth scale. Tobacco itself has poisonous effect, let alone impact of sub and low standard tobacco. There is hardly anybody who cares about the scale of health hazard to which these low incoming people are exposed to for smoking those tobacco products.

World Health Organisation (WHO) and other anti-tobacco organisations have been crying for a long time to control tobacco proliferation. Bangladesh signed the Framework Convention of Tobacco Control (FCTC) of the WHO calls for increasing prices and taxes on the most consumed cigarettes. It also calls for imposing more than 70% taxes on all kinds of cigarettes.

But in reality, country's revenue collector National Board of Revenue (NBR) has imposed 54% taxes on

cheap cigarettes. The consequence is simple. The health-hazard-unaware people are allowed to consume tobacco incessantly and with the short-time relief from smoking as like Alom Mia did; they are pushed to face the music of major tobacco born diseases in the long run.

Bangladesh spent some Tk 50.9 billion in tobacco related diseases in 2004, according to reports of Bloomberg Philanthropies and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.

To stop this equation of excessively high prices in comparison with the fleeting comfort, pragmatic steps have always been sought from concern sectors. The most effective policy in this regard, so far, is increasing prices and taxes of cigarettes, according to WHO. It has lowered the number of smokers worldwide. Following the WHO framework has made success stories in Costa Rica. The country now spends from the money it draws from increasing prices and taxes on cigarettes for Social Security Fund for diagnosis, treatment and prevention of diseases associated with smoking.

Again, the World No Tobacco Day, which will be observed on the last day of the upcoming month, has kept this year's theme as — Increase Taxes on Tobacco. Considering the health concern of the low incoming people, it is high time Bangladesh increased prices and taxes on cigarettes.



### Health Tips

### If you have been diagnosed with pre-diabetes

Your doctor has told you that you have pre-diabetes; that your blood sugar is high, but not too high to be considered diabetic. So what do you do to avoid developing the full-blown disease? The American Council on Exercise recommends these lifestyle changes:

- Commit to eating healthier, avoiding fad diets or products that guarantee quick and easy weight loss.
- Set aside at least 150 minutes per week for exercise.
- Set realistic, achievable weight-loss goals.
- Eliminate barriers to your healthy lifestyle goals, and build a support system to help you stay on track.
- Get regular medical checkups.



/StarHealthBD

## Knowing for better living

**Premenopausal** women who have **diabetes**, have an increased risk of **heart disease** !

Control your diabetes

Maintain a healthy diet

Control your body weight

Avoid smoking

Exercise regularly

Consult your Doctor



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