

Announcements

World Malaria Day — April 25, 2014

World Malaria Day is commemorated on April 25, the date in 2000 when 44 African leaders met in Abuja, Nigeria, and committed their countries to reducing malaria-related deaths. Between 2000 and 2012, the scale-up of effective malaria prevention and control interventions saved more than 3.3 million lives and decreased malaria mortality by 45% globally and 49% in sub-Saharan Africa. In spite of those accomplishments, an estimated 207 million cases of malaria occurred globally in 2012, resulting in an estimated 627,000 deaths. Because of increases in insecticide and drug resistance and changes in malaria epidemiology as a result of scaled-up interventions, new approaches are needed to sustain progress in malaria control and lead toward elimination. World Malaria Day 2014's theme, "Invest in the Future: Defeat Malaria," is a reminder of the challenge and the ultimate goal.

CDC supports global malaria control efforts through the President's Malaria Initiative, a U.S. government inter-agency initiative to reduce malaria incidence and mortality in 19 countries in sub-Saharan Africa and in the Greater Mekong Subregion in Asia. This effort has helped deliver millions of insecticide-treated mosquito nets, antimalarial drugs, and rapid diagnostic test kits to ensure that persons at risk for malaria will have access to life-saving prevention and treatment. CDC also conducts multidisciplinary strategic and applied research globally to increase knowledge about malaria and develop safe, effective interventions that can lead to the elimination and eventual eradication of malaria. Additional information regarding CDC's malaria activities is available at <http://www.cdc.gov/malaria>.

Reference

1. World Health Organization. World malaria report 2013. Geneva, Switzerland: World Health Organization; 2013. Available at http://www.who.int/malaria/publications/world_malaria_report_2013/en.

Air Quality Awareness Week and Asthma Awareness Month — May 2014

CDC is collaborating with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to urge U.S. residents to pay attention to their local air quality during Air Quality Awareness Week, April 28–May 2, 2014. May also is Asthma Awareness Month, and May 6 is World Asthma Day.

Asthma sufferers are particularly affected by air pollution. One in 12 U.S. residents (approximately 25.5 million persons) currently has asthma, and nine persons in the United States die from asthma-related complications every day (1). Ozone air pollution, more common in the summer months, can trigger asthma attacks, leading to increased medication use, visits to emergency departments, and hospital admissions. Persons with asthma and other at-risk groups can use daily forecasts of the Air Quality Index to plan exercise and other outdoor activities for times when air pollution is predicted to be low.

Persons with asthma and other chronic lung diseases, such as emphysema and chronic bronchitis, are not the only ones affected by ozone. Children, older adults, and active persons of all ages who exercise or work vigorously outdoors also are at risk. Ozone can irritate the respiratory system, reduce lung function, and inflame and damage the lungs. Over time, ozone exposure can cause permanent lung damage.

Daily air quality forecasts and current conditions for 400 U.S. cities are available at <http://www.airnow.gov> and through the AirNow mobile app (<http://m.epa.gov/apps/airnow.html>) and Enviroflash e-mail service (<http://www.enviroflash.info>).

Information on Air Quality Awareness Week is available at <http://epa.gov/airnow/airaware/index.html>. Information on Asthma Awareness Month is available at <http://www.epa.gov/asthma/awareness.html>. Additional information about asthma is available from CDC at <http://www.cdc.gov/asthma>.

Reference

1. CDC. FastStats: asthma. Atlanta, GA: US Department of Health and Human Services, CDC; 2014. Available at <http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/fastats/asthma.htm>.