

An unusual presentation of placental malaria: a single persisting nidus of sequestered parasites

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Summary

Placental malaria caused by *Plasmodium falciparum* is a public health concern in tropical countries. Peripheral **blood smears** to detect placental malaria are often negative, and **recrudescences** are common during pregnancy. We performed placental histology on a series of first-time mothers delivering in an area endemic for *P falciparum*. A single nidus of malaria-infected erythrocytes was identified by placental histology in a single **intervillous space** from a woman who had no other evidence of peripheral or placental blood **parasitemia**. This finding suggests ring stage–infected erythrocytes sequester in vivo, or *P falciparum* can persist as a dormant blood stage form.

Keywords

Malaria-falciparum Pregnancy Placenta Histology