

Malaria in pregnancy and the endemicity spectrum: what can we learn?

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The increased susceptibility of pregnant women to malaria infection has long been recognized, but the magnitude of the disease burden in this particular group, together with the pathophysiology of maternal malaria and the specific difficulties in treatment have only recently been the focus of research. Most research on maternal malaria has derived from sub-Saharan Africa where transmission is high, whereas most of the studies on the treatment of malaria and the effect of non-falciparum species has been conducted in low-transmission areas of Asia. In this paper, we attempt to improve our understanding of the disease and its mechanisms from observed differences and similarities between contrasting areas of transmission, and to identify priorities for future research.