

# Parasite Study Suggests Need For Rethink On Malaria Treatments

01 Oct 2012

[Click to Print](#)

Fresh discoveries about how the malaria parasite responds to drugs could help inform strategies for treating infection.

Scientists have shown for the first time that severe strains of the parasite, which cause the most harmful malarial infections, are harder to kill with treatment than less harmful strains.

The research suggests that drugs may unintentionally encourage more harmful strains to evolve because the treatments are more effective at killing milder strains of the disease.

Researchers say that this gives severe strains an advantage - they can survive better in the host and spread to mosquitoes, which pass on the infection to new hosts.

Over time this could mean that people with malaria, when untreated, suffer more harm from their disease.

The research also found that a commonly used malaria drug called artemisinin reduces the advantage that severe strains have over mild strains.

Experts say that careful choice of drugs to treat malaria could minimise the spread of more severe parasite strains.

Dr Petra Schneider of the University of Edinburgh's School of Biological Sciences said: "Drug treatment for malaria infections is very important and our results suggest that careful choice of drugs and treatment regimens could minimise unexpected consequences. The next step is to determine whether our findings in mice apply to malaria in humans."

The study by the University of Edinburgh and Pennsylvania State University was carried out in mice and is published in Proceedings of the Royal Society B and is supported by the Wellcome Trust.

---

## References:

Uni of Edinburgh

---

## Citations:

Please use one of the following formats to cite this article in your essay, paper or report:

### MLA

Uni of Edinburgh. "Parasite Study Suggests Need For Rethink On Malaria

Treatments." *Medical News Today*. MediLexicon, Intl., 1 Oct. 2012. Web. 2 Oct. 2012. <<http://www.medicalnewstoday.com/releases/250854.php>>

**APA**

Uni of Edinburgh. (2012, October 1). "Parasite Study Suggests Need For Rethink On Malaria Treatments." *Medical News Today*. Retrieved from <http://www.medicalnewstoday.com/releases/250854.php>.

Please note: If no author information is provided, the source is cited instead.

---

Any medical information published on this website is not intended as a substitute for informed medical advice and you should not take any action before consulting with a health care professional. For more information, please read our [terms and conditions](#).

 **Find us on Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/mntoday](http://www.facebook.com/mntoday)

Weekly newsletter e-mails available at: <http://www.medicalnewstoday.com/newsletters.php>

Send your press releases to [pressrelease@medicalnewstoday.com](mailto:pressrelease@medicalnewstoday.com)