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Jet lag key to tackling malaria parasites

ANI, Jan 7, 2011, 01.48pm IST

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A new research has suggested that the malaria-causing parasite is poor at spreading the disease if it is jet lagged.



Jet lag key to tackling malaria parasites (Thinkstock photos/Getty Images)

Researchers at the University of Edinburgh "jet lagged" the parasites by inserting them into mice whose body clocks were different to their own 24-hour cycle.

They found malaria was only half as effective at causing infection and spreading disease in mice, which had a different routine to the parasite.

The study is likely to improve the understanding of when malaria parasites are at their most harmful and when they are vulnerable and may be useful aid in developing treatments to tackle the disease.

"Our findings suggest that parasites have developed some clever tricks to get their timing right and cause an infection," the BBC quoted lead author Sarah Reece, of Edinburgh University's school of biological sciences, as saying.

"This is rare evidence that organisms whose body clock is in sync with their environment have a better chance of survival.

The more we know about how malaria parasites work, the better equipped we will be to tackle them effectively," said Reece.

The study was published in the journal *Proceedings of the Royal Society B*.

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