



Malaria Test Requirements

Malaria is one of the most important illnesses to rule out when assessing fever in a returned traveller. Presentations may range from a mild febrile illness to life threatening multi-organ failure. Any person living in a non-endemic area like New Zealand who has travelled to a malaria-endemic region may be at risk. This is true even if they used to live in a malaria-endemic area (e.g. new residents to NZ who are returning to their home country to visit family or friends), or even if they were taking malaria prophylaxis.

Malaria is present in most tropical parts of the world although the risk varies from place to place. Please note there is NO malaria in Australia, New Zealand or the Pacific Islands (Samoa, Cook Islands, Niue, Tonga, Fiji, New Caledonia). It is present in Melanesia (Vanuatu, Solomon Islands and Papua New Guinea), most of South East Asia, Indian subcontinent, Sub-Saharan Africa, Caribbean and parts of central and South America. Up to date advice on malaria risk and other causes of fever in your returned traveller can be obtained from the Infectious Diseases service at Wellington Hospital. They will be happy to provide advice on the optimal work up and initial management. Please note that from 14 April 2014 malaria testing will only be performed at Aotea Pathology if a travel history is given. Please include dates and places of travel to allow proper interpretation of investigations.

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