

[Am J Trop Med Hyg.](#) 2003 Dec;69(6):582-8.

## **The impact of repeated malaria attacks on the school performance of children.**

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### **Source**

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### **Abstract**

The impact of repeated malarial infections on the school performance of children was investigated in 571 school children 6-14 years of age in a malaria-endemic area in southern Sri Lanka where both *Plasmodium falciparum* and *P. vivax* infections are prevalent. Malaria infections confirmed by microscopy were monitored over a six-year period. School performance was assessed by two specially designed, school grade-specific, test papers for Sinhala language and mathematics. The scores for Sinhala language and mathematics for each school term test for the year 1997 were obtained. Malarial infections were a major predictor of children's performance in language and mathematics after controlling for parent's education, monthly family income, and house type. The education of the father predicted language scores but not mathematics scores. A child who experienced more than five attacks of malaria scored approximately 15% less than a child who experienced less than three attacks of malaria. The data suggest that repeated attacks of malaria have an adverse impact on the school performance of children.