



# Malaria compared to chikungunya

Malaria		chikungunya	
<b>Vector</b>	Female <i>Anopheles</i> mosquitoes	<b>Vector</b>	<i>Aedes aegypti</i> and <i>Aedes albopictus</i> mosquitoes
<b>Biting behaviours</b>	Mainly <b>night-biting</b> (dusk to dawn)	<b>Biting behaviours</b>	Mainly <b>day-biting</b> (early morning & late afternoon)
<b>Cause</b>	<b>Parasite</b> ( <i>Plasmodium</i> species: <i>P. falciparum</i> , <i>P. vivax</i> , <i>P. ovale</i> , <i>P. malariae</i> , <i>P. knowlesi</i> )	<b>Cause</b>	<b>Virus</b> (chikungunya virus, genus <i>Alphavirus</i> , family <i>Togaviridae</i> )
<b>Incubation period</b>	~7–30 days (commonly 10–14 days for <i>P. falciparum</i> )	<b>Incubation period</b>	2–12 days (usually 4–8 days)
<b>Main symptoms</b>	Cyclical fever, chills, sweats, headache, fatigue, muscle pain; sometimes jaundice and anaemia	<b>Main symptoms</b>	Sudden high fever, <b>severe joint pain</b> (arthralgia), muscle pain, headache, rash
<b>Chronic symptoms</b>	Recurrence if untreated; <i>P. vivax</i> and <i>P. ovale</i> can cause relapses months/years later	<b>Chronic symptoms</b>	Joint pain and stiffness can persist for weeks to months; sometimes >1 year
<b>Severity</b>	Can be <b>life-threatening</b> (especially <i>P. falciparum</i> > cerebral malaria, organ failure, death)	<b>Severity</b>	Usually self-limiting and rarely fatal, but can cause long-term disability from joint pain
<b>Treatment</b>	Antimalarial drugs (e.g., artemisinin-based combination therapy; choice depends on species and drug resistance patterns)	<b>Treatment</b>	No specific antiviral; supportive care (rest, fluids, pain relief with paracetamol/NSAIDs – avoid aspirin due to bleeding risk)
<b>Vaccine available?</b>	Yes — RTS,S/AS01 (Mosquirix®) and R21/Matrix-M for <i>P. falciparum</i> rolled out for children primarily in countries with moderate to high-transmission areas	<b>Vaccine available?</b>	Yes — first licensed vaccine (Ixchiq™) approved in USA (2023) for ≥18 years; limited availability globally, not yet licensed or available in South Africa. May in the future be offered as a travellers vaccine in South Africa