

World Malaria Day 2021

This year, World Malaria Day is running with the backdrop of countries around the world continuing to fight the COVID-19 pandemic.

Apr 25, 2021

The COVID-19 pandemic highlights the importance of robust health systems to respond to disease outbreaks and to control other deadly diseases such as malaria. On World Malaria Day, April 25, we are calling on the global health community to continue to uphold progress and commitments made in the fight to end malaria.

Follow us on social media at [#MalariaFuture](https://twitter.com/MalariaFuture)



In 1999, Novartis launched the first fixed-dose Artemisinin-based Combination Therapy (ACT) and in 2009, the first dispersible pediatric ACT developed in partnership with Medicines for Malaria Venture (MMV). Over the past 20 years, together with our partners, we have delivered nearly 1 billion treatments, including over 430 million pediatric treatments to malaria-endemic countries.

Working on next-generation antimalarials

Novartis is advancing Research & Development of next-generation treatments to combat emerging drug resistance. We lead five malaria development programs worldwide, featuring three compounds that employ new mechanisms of action and activity against artemisinin-resistant strains of the disease. KAF156 belongs to a novel class of antimalarial compounds that act against both the blood and liver stages of the parasite's lifecycle. It demonstrated activity against both vivax and falciparum malaria, including artemisinin-resistant parasites. Novartis leads the development of this compound with scientific and financial support from MMV in collaboration with the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

KAE609 is another novel antimalarial compound demonstrating rapid clearance of parasites pre-clinically and in patients. Novartis is leading the development of KAE609 in collaboration with MMV and with financial support from the Wellcome Trust.

In 2020, we discovered another novel malaria therapy, INE963, which has an entirely new mechanism of action and is expected to begin clinical trials in 2021. INE963 is a fast-acting, long-lasting antimalarial that could potentially be delivered as a single-dose cure. It was discovered with support from MMV and received the organization's "Project of the Year" award in 2020.

As part of the PAMAFrica research consortium led by Medicines for Malaria Venture, we also initiated the development of a new formulation of our ACT for infants weighing less than 5 kilograms. This is one of the most vulnerable groups affected by malaria, for whom there is currently no approved treatment.

Read about our progress in our [factsheet](#) and in the [Novartis in Society ESG report \(p.50-51\) \(PDF 6.3 MB\)](#)

R&D partnerships to combat drug-resistant malaria in Africa

The European & Developing Countries Clinical Trials Partnership (EDCTP) awarded a grant to the [new PAMAFrica research consortium](#) led by MMV. The consortium will support the development of new treatments for malaria in the most-at-risk populations, including babies, patients with severe malaria, and those with drug-resistant infections. The EDCTP grant of EUR 21.9 million will be matched by funding from MMV, Novartis and partners.

Further, the EDCTP granted EUR 10 million over five years to the [West African Network for Clinical Trials of Antimalarial Drugs](#), a collaboration between antimalarial drug researchers in Africa and Europe from 10 academic institutions, Novartis and MMV. The grant will support African trials of a combination comprising KAF156 and lumefantrine in a new once-daily formulation.

Closing the gap for children with malaria

Despite the tremendous progress made in combating malaria in the past two decades, one child still dies from the disease every two minutes. We are committed to contributing to the WHO's target of reducing malaria-related child mortality by at least 90% in 2030 by bringing our medicines to these small patients as quickly as possible.

In Nigeria, we are working with partners to strengthen access to diagnosis and treatment at patent and proprietary medicine vendor (PPMV) shops for children under age 5 with malaria. We expect to expand to additional countries in Sub-Saharan Africa in the coming years.

Local insights and learnings are key to accelerating progress

Novartis commissioned opinion research studies in sub-Saharan and Central Africa, and in five countries in South and Southeast Asia to capture the views of malaria experts – from government, the research community and NGOs – on progress and challenges toward the 2030 global malaria goals.

Read the reports

- [Malaria Futures for Africa](#)
- [Malaria Futures for Asia](#)

Additional Resources

- [Novartis Global Health: Malaria](#)
- [Malaria factsheet](#)
- [Novartis Global Health on LinkedIn](#)
- [Novartis Global Health on Twitter](#)
- [RBM Partnership To End Malaria](#)
- [Medicines for Malaria Venture](#)
- [Malaria No More](#)
- [Malaria No More United Kingdom](#)
- [Swiss Malaria Group](#)
- [African Leaders Malaria Alliance](#)
- [Asian Pacific Leaders Malaria Alliance](#)

Novartis Corporate Affairs & Global Health

Novartis Corporate Affairs & Global Health aims to transform health in lower income populations through applying expertise, people and full organizational capability to address major, unresolved global health challenges. Malaria is part of the Novartis Corporate Affairs & Global Health Unit as a Flagship program. For more than 20 years, Novartis has been working with partners around the world to eliminate malaria. Since 2000, we have delivered more than 1 billion treatment courses of our antimalarial, including more than 430 million courses of our child-friendly formulation in 50 countries, contributing to a significant reduction in malaria death.

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List of links present in page

1. <https://prod1.novartis.com/news/world-malaria-day-2021>
2. <https://twitter.com/hashtag/malariafuture?f=tweets&vertical=default>
3. <https://prod1.novartis.com/news/media-library/malaria>
4. https://prod1.novartis.com/sites/novartis_com/files/novartis-in-society-report-2020.pdf#page=50
5. <https://prod1.novartis.com/news/media-releases/international-research-partnership-and-edctp-invest-eu44m-next-generation-antimalarials-combat-drug-resistant-malaria-africa>
6. <https://prod1.novartis.com/news/media-releases/europe-africa-partnership-spearheads-development-next-generation-antimalarial-drug>
7. <https://prod1.novartis.com/news/media-library/malaria-futures-africa>
8. <https://prod1.novartis.com/news/media-library/malaria-futures-asia>
9. <https://prod1.novartis.com/diseases/malaria>
10. <https://prod1.novartis.com/news/media-library/malaria>
11. <https://www.linkedin.com/company/novartis-global-health/>
12. <https://twitter.com/novartisgh>
13. <https://endmalaria.org/>
14. <https://www.mmv.org/>
15. <https://www.malarianomore.org/>
16. <https://malarianomore.org.uk/>
17. <https://www.swissmalariagroup.ch/en/>
18. <https://alma2030.org/>
19. <https://www.aplma.org/>