The lifecycle of the malaria parasite

In the blood of an infected patient a minority of parasites develop into the transmissible (sexual) form of the parasite—the gametocytes. It is these gametocytes, taken up in the mosquito’s blood meal, that infect the mosquito and thus continue the parasite’s lifecycle.

1. *P. vivax* malaria is the most prevalent species in Southeast Asia and South America. It has the ability to become dormant in the liver ("hypnozoite") and can be reactivated after months, or even years, leading to malaria relapse (symptom onset) despite the absence of a new mosquito bite.

2. The blood stage causes clinical malaria symptoms which can be uncomplicated or severe. Uncomplicated malaria symptoms include fever, shaking, profuse sweating, headache, nausea, vomiting, diarrhoea and anaemia. Severe malaria symptoms include severe anaemia and organ damage (coma in the case of cerebral malaria).

3. The timings are for *Plasmodium falciparum* only

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Defeating Malaria Together