

MOSQUITOES AND MARMITE

Positive protective action is an essential for any person visiting an area where malaria is endemic and an officially authorized course of prophylactic medicine is essential protection, remembering that the course, often requiring that pills be taken days before, during and days after your visit to hazardous regions. Just in case one becomes a victim of some lone marauding female mosquito searching for her necessary egg-laying, vampire-like meal of blood.

Be aware too that that the *Anopheles sp.* Malarial mosquito has been accused of transmitting up to 21 other rather nasty tropical and sub-tropical diseases – a further very good reason for avoiding their attentions.

Additionally, avoiding being bitten in the first place is an effective protective strategy but one that should never replace medicinal protection. In this context a light long sleeved evening shirt or blouse, mosquito nets whilst sleeping and marmite can be of great help. Nets you may know about but what about the Marmite?

Mosquito nets are extremely effective protection not only in preventing access to food but also preventing the escape of the successful insect. Although this is akin to 'shutting a stable door' it does have the advantage of enabling the elimination of the potential malarial vector before it has the opportunity of transmitting more of its pathogenic cargo to other unsuspecting human victims.

But how about the Marmite? It turns out that mosquitoes in general appear to have an instinctive hatred of the stuff. Eat plenty of Marmite and you create a protective barrier around yourself to guard against marauding mosquitoes. You don't like Marmite? Fair enough, try consuming healthy doses of Vitamin B supplement which turns out to be the component of marmite that the mosquitoes so dislike – or perhaps the marmite might be modified into a body lotion and used to deter the attentions of the insects that way.

This article was contributed by Martyn, our resident Marmite addict.

Editorial comment: Whilst most of us are not animal lovers to the extent of wishing to avoid exterminating the innocent male mosquito it is easy to identify if your assailant is a predatory female or just an innocent male a drinker of fruit juice.

The antennae of the male are very noticeably bushy whilst those of the female are very sparsely haired