

## **With Summer Here, the Battle Against the World's Deadliest Creature Begins**

### *University of Maryland School of Medicine Experts Available to Discuss Research, Vaccine Development and Other Issues in the Fight Against Mosquito-Borne Diseases*

BALTIMORE (June 16) - With the summer season now here, attention is once again focused on what has been called the deadliest creature in the world -- the mosquito. This blood-sucking insect is responsible for more than one million deaths a year, according to the World Health Organization. Malaria is the biggest culprit of mosquito-borne deaths, but now emerging viruses like Zika are on the minds of many travelers. Many want to know what they can do to protect themselves.

Most of us don't know:

**What makes a mosquito so deadly? Do all mosquitoes carry viruses? What happens when I get bitten? What treatment should I seek? Where is it unsafe to travel? Why are more people getting infectious diseases?**

Research scientists and virologists at the University of Maryland School of Medicine are available to answer these questions and provide valuable expertise and information about mosquitoes and how we can better prevent and treat infectious diseases.

**Travel Preparedness:** Wilbur H. Chen, MD, MS, is an adult infectious disease physician-scientist with a focus on clinical vaccinology. Dr. Chen is a member of the Center for Vaccine Development team. He is Director of the Travelers' Health Clinic, which is staffed by CVD internists and pediatricians. Dr. Chen can discuss the best ways to prevent contracting mosquito-borne diseases for those traveling to countries where malaria and other infectious diseases are prevalent.

**Zika Virus and Vaccine Development:** Monica A. McArthur, MD, PhD, has conducted research on the interactions between pathogens and the human immune system. She has done a considerable amount of research on the Zika virus and other diseases such as dengue fever. She can discuss the process and challenges in developing a vaccine.

**Eliminating/Eradicating Malaria:** Christopher Plowe, MD, MPH, FASTMH, is Director of the Institute for Global Health. He can discuss malaria vaccine development efforts, research to eliminate malaria and the rising threat of drug-resistant strains. Dr. Plowe is an expert on global health initiatives, having served on advisory panels for the World Health Organization and other groups.

**Impact on Children:** Miriam K. Laufer, MD, MPH, is director of the Division of Malaria Research and a pediatric infectious disease specialist with primary research interests in malaria and global child health. She has clinical expertise in preparing children for travel. She leads pioneering research on the impact of malaria in individuals living with HIV, pregnant women and their infants, and the prevalence of malaria in school children in Africa.

**Immunology and Tropical Diseases:** Kirsten E. Lyke, MD, is an expert in malaria, tropical diseases and parasite immunology. She is the Director of the Malaria Vaccine and Challenge Unit and has conducted malaria and tropical diseases vaccine studies. Dr. Lyke led ebola and dengue fever vaccine trials and participated in the first Zika vaccine trial.

**If you would like to speak with one of our experts please contact:**

Joanne Morrison  
Director of Public Relations  
University of Maryland School of Medicine  
+1 (202) 706-2884  
Jmorrison@som.umaryland.edu