

# Malaria drug association with hemolytic anemia unclear

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Artesunate, a drug used in the treatment of severe malaria, may or may not be associated with hemolytic anemia, so the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends close monitoring of patients treated with the drug for four weeks after administration of the agent, according to a report published in the Jan. 11 issue of the CDC's *Morbidity & Mortality Weekly Report*.

(HealthDay)—Artesunate, a drug used in the treatment of severe malaria, may or may not be associated with hemolytic anemia, so the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends close monitoring of patients treated with the drug for four weeks after administration of the agent, according to a report published in the Jan. 11 issue of the CDC's *Morbidity & Mortality Weekly Report*.

Melissa Briggs, M.D., of the CDC in Atlanta, and colleagues reviewed reports of delayed hemolytic anemia after treatment with artesunate over concern that there may be an association between the illness and treatment with the anti-malaria medication.

The researchers theorized that the hemolysis was more likely due to the pathogenesis of malaria than to treatment with artesunate, but noted that artesunate used in the United States is produced by the U.S. Army Medical Materiel Development Activity, whereas artesunate used outside the United States has a different origin. As a result, there might be a difference between artesunates produced in different locales.

"To better assess these possibilities, [the] CDC has amended the artesunate investigational new drug protocol and now recommends that persons treated for severe malaria with artesunate be followed for four weeks after treatment and evaluated for [hemolytic anemia](#)," the authors write.

**More information:** [Full Text](#)

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