



Public Health Message

from the Fort Wayne-AlLEN County Department of Health

Date: March 10, 2010
Topic: Disaster Volunteers

Last Thursday, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reported that 11 cases of the P.falciparum malaria infection, acquired in Haiti, have been confirmed among emergency personnel and Haitian residents who traveled to the U.S. "Displaced persons living outdoors or in temporary shelters and thousands of emergency responders in Haiti are at substantial risk for malaria," said the CDC. The cases include: seven emergency responders, including six military personnel; three Haitian residents who traveled to the U.S., including one Haitian adoptee; and one U.S. traveler.

Among the responders' cases, four of the cases were uncomplicated and treated in Haiti, while two were "moderately to seriously ill" and transferred to the United States for intensive care, the CDC said. All are expected to make a full recovery.

On Saturday, March 13th, we will be providing a free seminar designed to prepare volunteers to better perform in the disaster environment, to minimize health threats through **free vaccination, education and provision of prescriptions**, and to better cope with emotional needs. The event is at the Public Safety Academy of Northeast Indiana, 7602 Patriot Crossing, in Fort Wayne. Registration will begin at 8:30 AM and the seminar will run until approximately 3 PM. Lunch will be provided.

We strongly encourage you and your fellow volunteers to make this clinic part of your pre-travel preparations. I know you are tough – but maybe not that tough!

Other pearls:

Dr. Pond: Take dollar bills, take a tent and maybe practice in your back yard before you go!

Cami Pond: Take the little cans of tuna, and lots of little treats for the team and the Haitian children!

Patsy Hendricks:

- Be prepared that people in other countries, have a very distorted view of what it is really like in the US. They think we all have maids, don't work and live like TV actors/actresses. And really want you to take them back home with you.
- Make sure you take a lot and all prescriptions you need to a disaster site, since drug stores are not open. Also take anything you cannot go without, because there is a good chance you will have to do without it.
- You must be able to sleep anywhere and in any situation, if you don't sleep you will get sick!
- MRE's have 1250 calories each and the gum in them contains a laxative
- After working 12 hours at a disaster site the best feeling is being able to take a lukewarm shower, even if it is in a tent with 8 other women.

Melanie Koch:

- Wear close toed shoes and socks.

Please RSVP by calling Alice at (260) 420-1011. We look forward to seeing you there.

Deb McMahan, MD