Knowledge of malaria and the practices towards its control among urban dwellers in Benin City.

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Objective: To determine the knowledge of malaria and its control methods among urban dwellers in Benin City, Edo State with a view to making recommendations on its prevention.

Methods: The study was of a cross-sectional descriptive type, using multistage sampling technique. Semi-structured questionnaires were researcher-administered and data analysed by means of the Computer Programme for Epidemiologic Research (CPER).

Results: The indices of the knowledge of malaria were generally high. 92.5% had correct knowledge about the symptoms, 98.0% its mode of transmission, all the respondents knew at least one method of its preventive measures and 87.0% knew about therapy with chloroquine and other drugs. There was however, poor knowledge of the artemisinin-based combination therapy (10.6%) and the Roll Back Malaria Initiative (31.5%). In spite of the positive findings on the knowledge, the practice of preventive measures were poor with only 27.8% using door and window nettings, 0.8% using insecticide treated mosquito nets and 25.6% using insecticides.

Conclusion: Despite the availability of extensive sources of health information, there is the need for appropriate health education to stimulate positive changes in both knowledge and practice of malaria control. In addition, the campaign to “Roll Back Malaria” requires intensification.

Keywords: Malaria; Knowledge and control; Urban dwellers; Benin City; Nigeria