
Fatal malaria in a German couple returning from Burkina Faso.

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We report on a German couple found dead at home 7 days after returning from Burkina Faso. Postmortem evaluation revealed *Plasmodium falciparum* infection with a parasitemia of approximately 80% in both cases. No pathological findings of the organs were present at autopsy except moderate splenomegaly in both cases and myocarditis in one case. Typical findings of fatal malaria like petechial hemorrhages of the brain or other organs, or sequestration of parasitized erythrocytes in venules and capillaries were absent. Lack of sequestration with excessive hyperparasitemia leading to systemic hypoxemia and host cytokine release may have contributed to the rapid fatal course in these nonimmune patients.

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