

Leishmaniasis: Genetic link found in far-flung victims of a lethal form of a parasitic disease

Whether someone bitten by a sandfly goes on to develop the most lethal form of [leishmaniasis](#) is determined partly by the victim's own genes, a [new study](#) suggests.

Leishmaniasis, caused by parasites injected by sandfly bites, has two forms: painful skin sores (known to American troops in [Iraq](#) as "Baghdad boils") or, in less than 20 percent of cases, the visceral form, sometimes called "kala azar," that attacks the organs and is fatal if untreated. About 400,000 visceral cases develop annually, 90 percent of them in three places far from one another and with different parasite subspecies: northeastern Brazil, the India-Bangladesh border and the Horn of Africa.

View the original article here: [Leishmaniasis: A Genetic Link Found in Far-Flung Victims of a Lethal Form of a Parasitic Disease](#)