

'Supermalaria' may be heading to Africa, as global health threat grows

[Editor's note: Janet Midega is a scientist at the KEMRI-Wellcome Trust Research Program in Kilifi, Kenya and a research associate at the University of Oxford's Center for Genomics and Global Health.]

There has been growing hope in recent years that malaria could eventually be eradicated but that sense of optimism is currently facing some major new challenges. [Scientists are warning](#) that a "supermalaria" parasite is spreading rapidly across Southeast Asia, and could pose a global health threat if it spreads to Africa. It is resistant to [artemisinin](#), the recommended first-line treatment for malaria. In addition, if the U.S. Congress carries out the proposed [44 percent cut](#) to the President's Malaria initiative (PMI) funding, it could have a significantly undercut prevention and treatment programs. [Projections show](#) that the PMI cut alone could lead to an additional 300,000 malaria deaths over the next four years.

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The malaria research community has a great sense of commitment to exploring ways of controlling the disease and mustn't be despondent even in the face of supermalaria. It might take a lot of time, work and funding to tackle this new challenge but we have more experience and knowledge than ever before. However, to keep the hope of malaria eradication in our sights, we must apply the lessons learnt over the decades of successful malaria control to halt the spread of this super parasite and avert a crisis. It might be a new battle to face, but it doesn't mean that we have lost the war.

Read full, original post: ["Supermalaria" Is on the Way](#)