

## **Enabling Debate on Malaria Parasite Drug Resistance**

Malaria is responsible for the deaths of hundreds of thousands of people in tropical countries every year. There is currently only one completely effective drug that can be used to treat the disease - artemisinin. Recently, it has been reported that resistance to the drugs may be developing in some countries in Southeast Asia, a phenomenon that has attracted large-scale media attention, and has prompted a large scale and costly containment effort in the region. However, researchers as at Nagasaki University Institute of Tropical Medicine have questioned the definition of artemisinin resistance and have recommended a more rigorous scientific investigation of the phenomenon. Writing in the leading journal 'Trends in Parasitology' this month, Nagasaki University Drs Pedro Ferreira and Richard Culleton urge the malaria research community to reconsider the definition of what constitutes 'resistance' in malaria parasites in order to properly assess the danger posed by artemisinin resistance, and therefore enable appropriate and proportionate responses. This work is an important addition to the current debate on how best to maximise the usefulness of artemisinin, and will stir up healthy discussion within the malaria research community.

More information on the publication can be found here:

<http://www.cell.com/trends/parasitology/home>

Dr Pedro Ferreira, the lead author on the report, is currently a Post-Doctoral Research Fellow at the Institute of Tropical medicine:

<http://pedroemferreira.wix.com/cvitae>

And Dr Richard Culleton is Associate Professor and head of the Malaria Unit, Institute of Tropical Medicine:

[http://www.tm.nagasaki-u.ac.jp/malariaunit/Culleton\\_Lab/Home.html](http://www.tm.nagasaki-u.ac.jp/malariaunit/Culleton_Lab/Home.html)