

THE MENACE OF STAGNANT WATER

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In the quest for a healthier environment, the Federal Government has introduced every last Saturday of the month as a date set aside for general cleaning of the environment around the homes and offices. This has led to a remarkable success in creating a healthier environment by making it unfavorable for some invertebrates like mosquitoes in completing their life cycles.

On the other hand, some people especially women have a passion for beautifying their homes with flowers. At times part of the house like the frontage is beautified with flowers in flower pots or planted on the ground in a way that stones are arranged in concentric circles or otherwise.

However, you must be warned that these stones serve as resting places or hiding places for some reptiles e.g Monitor Lizards, Snakes and Amphibians like Frogs and Toads while the water that collects around these flowers serves as breeding sites of Mosquitoes.

This paper is mainly concerned with stagnant water which could be seen in pot holes, ditches, refuse sites, grass, flower pots and abandoned containers such as those for Sardine, Nan, Bournvita, Nido, Lactogen, Broken bottles and so forth. These serve as breeding sites for a wide variety of some disease vectors (mosquitoes) which are carriers of Malaria, Filariasis and Yellow Fever.

The adult female mosquito having imbibed or engorged blood of a vertebrate host notably man becomes fully matured and when the temperature becomes favorable it oviposits its eggs in a favorable medium. After a few days the eggs hatch to larvae, these then feed mainly on insects and other small invertebrates. Eventually the larvae hatch to pupae (these are the non-feeding stages). They later on metamorphose to adults. Understandably, the adult feeds on various hosts such as man.

During the engorgement period there is a possibility of a Mosquito picking up Haemoparasites (malaria parasites - *Plasmodium species* viz *Plasmodium falciparum*, *Plasmodium ovale*, *Plasmodium malaria* and *Plasmodium vivax*) from a host already infected with these parasites. Since the Mosquito feeds on a wide range of hosts the parasites would be transmitted to an uninfected host during its blood meal i.e when in contact with a susceptible hosts. Various forms of developments take place in the invertebrate host (the mosquito) and the vertebrate host (man).

To combat the adverse affects and risks to which each and every one of us is exposed to Mosquito bites. It is important to take to these precautionary measures:

Ensure that your room is flected with an insecticide about one hour before your normal bed time, when flecting the room concentrate on areas like hangers, wardrobes, shoe rakes, under the beds and other corners of the room for these are mainly resting sites for diurnal and nocturnal species of mosquitoes.

Some people get rid of mosquitoes by the use of broom. This method should be discouraged since it has the disadvantage of leaving blood marks on walls thereby making the walls look dirty.

It is important to have a mosquito net in order to minimize undue contact.

Ensure that your windows have wire mesh.

Close all windows and doors leading to the bedrooms as early as 5:00pm.

Drain all gutters, pot holes and get rid of all abandoned containers around the home.

Finally, flowers are meant to beautify the homes and not to replace forests around the yard.