

Malaria outbreak hits Costa Rica's east coast

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Costa Rica, a popular Central American tourist draw, is fighting an outbreak of malaria on its east coast, authorities said.

Health officials carried out [house](#)-to-house checks Saturday in Costa Rican Caribbean towns in search of malaria cases, after detecting an

outbreak that has infected 60 people, authorities said.

Many of the infections were detected in Limon (26 cases), the largest Caribbean city in the country, and in the neighboring canton of Pococi (32), located further north and bordering Nicaragua.

No deaths have been reported, although the disease is potentially fatal.

The director of Health Monitoring, Rodrigo Marin, said that "75 percent of these cases were reported during the last two weeks." He said it was impossible to know whether they had been brought in from abroad.

Malaria, which is transmitted by mosquitoes in low-lying areas, is endemic in Costa Rica and other Latin American nations.

Symptoms include fever, chills, headache and muscle pain.

In 2021, "17 countries and one territory in the region of the Americas with endemic malaria accounted for 0.2% of malaria cases in the world," according to a report released in December by the World Health Organization (WHO).

That year there were some 600,000 cases and 334 deaths from malaria in the region.

Venezuela, Colombia and Brazil together accounted for almost 79 percent of the total in the Americas, according to the report.

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