

Good Health: Worms, Malaria, and Dengue

Quarter 8 • Lesson 12

Focus on Life Skills

1. *Connecting:* Hear a short Bible story and guess how it ends (Acts 12:21–23).
2. *Teaching:* Learn about the symptoms, causes, and prevention of worms and 2 diseases caused by mosquito bites.
3. *Responding:* Practice prevention behaviours for health concerns.

SUPPLIES

- Bible

Optional Supplies:

- Memory Verse Poster
- *The Action Bible*, image of Herod glorifying himself
- 2 pieces of string, each about 1 meter long (or 1 stick)
- 3 empty containers
- 3 stones to use as soap
- 6 large stones to use as vegetables
- 3 cups and 3 plates or 6 leaves
- 3 rags
- Student Pages
- Pencils

Teacher Devotion

*"I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me,
I was in prison and you came to visit me"...*

*The King will reply, "Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these
brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me."*

Matthew 25:36, 40

Sometimes Jesus can seem so far away, and we do not know how to do anything for Him. Yet He has told us that when we care for those right in front of us, we are caring for Him. Look around you. Who has a need? Is there someone who lacks food or clothing? Is there someone who is sick or needs visiting? Jesus wants us to be like Him—He wants us to notice the people around us and reach out to help their needs. This shows His love to the world around us. It also births His heart in us!

When you teach these lessons of how to prevent and treat health issues, you are doing what Jesus talked about in Matthew 25. You are caring for “the least of these brothers of mine.” Spend time praying for each child in your class by name. What are their physical needs? What are their spiritual needs? How can you help meet their needs now? How can you equip them to take care of their own needs in the future? Ask God to open your eyes to see those around you through His eyes.

Family Connection: Tell families that this week their children will learn about worms and 2 diseases caused by mosquito bites—malaria and dengue fever. If possible, make copies of the Resource Article about these diseases and share it with the families.

LESSON TIME

1. Connecting: Hear a short Bible story and guess how it ends (Acts 12:21–23).

Greet your children warmly as they arrive. Review what they learned last week about clean water by asking them about their own water. Did they learn anything in last week’s lesson that helped them?

This week we will continue to learn about good health. We will start by hearing a story from the Bible about someone who had worms. His name was Herod. There was a surprising reason he had worms. Listen for that reason.

Herod was the king over Israel during the time of the early Christian church. He was very popular among many of the Jews. At the time of this story, Herod came out in his royal robes, sat on his throne, and spoke to the people. The people loved his speech so much they started calling out, “It is the voice of a god, not a man.” Immediately, because Herod did not give the praise to God ...

Now I will read 4 possible things that may have happened. After I read each statement, I will point to a different area of our room. If you think that is what really happened, go to that area. You can only choose 1 area to go to.

Read the 4 possible answers. Point to different areas of your teaching space for each answer. After the children have moved to the 4 areas, tell them the correct answer, which is underlined.

- **What do you think happened next?**

Herod’s heart stopped, and he died.

Herod was eaten by worms and died.

A hungry lion escaped from its cage and attacked Herod.

Herod was killed by Roman soldiers.

Listen to what the Bible says happened to Herod.

If possible, share the image from The Action Bible.

Read Acts 12:23 directly from your Bible.

*Immediately, because Herod did not give praise to God,
an angel of the Lord struck him down, and he was eaten by worms and died.*

Acts 12:23

Herod did something very bad. He allowed people to think he was a god! God punished Herod for this, and that is the surprising reason he had worms. Being eaten by worms was Herod's punishment. Most people do not die from worms. And if you have worms, it does not mean that God is punishing you.

Today, we will talk about worms and some diseases caused by mosquito bites. Like many diseases, we can do some things to help prevent them.

Gather the children back together.

2. Teaching: Learn about the symptoms, causes, and prevention of worms and 2 diseases caused by mosquito bites.

In today's story, worms killed Herod immediately as God's punishment. Remember, this is not the normal way that worms infect someone. There are many different types of worms, so we will learn some basic information about most types of worms. Worms lay their eggs and grow inside of a person. They eat the food in a person's intestines or suck his blood from inside. Intestinal worms can live up to 3 years.

At first, a person may not notice that he has worms. He may be very hungry and eat a lot without gaining any weight. Or he may not feel hungry at all. A person with worms may have a swollen tummy or an itchy bottom. He may be restless at night and have trouble falling asleep. Worms can prevent children from growing properly. Children with worms can be bad-tempered and tired. They may not do well at school.

Explain to the children how a person gets worms.

Most worms get inside of a person when the person swallows their eggs. The hookworm is picked up from the soil through the skin. When a worm reaches the intestine, it lays eggs. The eggs pass out of the body in the faeces. Most worm eggs take more than a week to become infectious, so older faeces are more dangerous than fresher faeces.

If faeces are left where people walk and sit, the eggs in the faeces get into the dust and soil. They are carried on the person's feet and clothes to things that are touched, such as furniture. Flies can also carry worm eggs from faeces to dishes, food, and furniture. Worm eggs get onto food that is prepared or eaten with dirty hands. Some worms are also found in undercooked pork or on the skins of fruits and vegetables.

Because you cannot see worm eggs, you do not even know when you have swallowed them. You do not know that they have begun to grow inside of you.

The good news is that worms can easily be cured by medication from a health worker. The best thing, of course, is not to get worms. Here are some tips on how to prevent getting worms.

Remember that washing your hands after you use the toilet helps prevent diarrhoea. It is also important to help prevent getting worms.

If people do not have toilets, they should bury faeces far away from their homes. Worm eggs can still grow in buried faeces, so faeces should be buried in deep holes away from water sources and away from areas where people live.

It is also important to wash fruits and vegetables before eating them.

Teacher Tip: If any of the following diseases do not occur where you live, you do not need to talk about them.

Worms are terrible, but they can be prevented by caring for your body and your hygiene. The next health concern we will talk about is much worse. It is diseases caused by mosquito bites. We will talk about 2 of these diseases—malaria and dengue fever.

These diseases are spread by certain types of mosquitoes. Mosquitoes get the disease germs by biting someone who has the disease. The mosquito passes the disease on when it bites someone else and the germs enter that person's blood. Although you should try to avoid being bitten by mosquitoes, not every mosquito bite will make you sick.

With malaria, the person begins to feel sick about a week after being bitten. The person will get a fever, and he may also experience sweating, shivering, headaches, vomiting, and diarrhoea. The fever may go away for a while, but it keeps coming back. It may get worse each time it comes back.

Health workers can test for malaria with a blood test and treat it with medication. Malaria is curable if treatment starts early. But delaying treatment can lead to serious illness and even death. Children are at greater risk than adults for developing malaria. Any child with a fever who lives in an area where malaria is present should be taken to a health clinic immediately. The health worker will test the child for the disease.

With dengue fever, the person begins to feel sick between 4 and 10 days after being bitten. The symptoms include severe headache, muscle or bone pain, rash, severe pain behind the eyes, and mild bleeding from the nose or gums. There is no medicine for dengue, but people can treat the symptoms with acetaminophen and by drinking lots of liquids. A child who shows the symptoms of dengue fever should also see a doctor.

Optional, if the Zika virus is common in your area

With the Zika virus, the person usually begins to feel sick about 2 weeks after being bitten. But some people do not have any symptoms at all. The common symptoms are fever, rash, headaches, joint and muscle pain, and red eyes. There are no medicines to treat it, and most people do not even need to go to the hospital. The biggest danger with the Zika virus is for pregnant women. Their babies can have very serious brain defects which cannot be cured.

End of Option

The only way to prevent these diseases is to prevent mosquito bites, so try to keep mosquitoes away. If possible, screen the windows, doors, and other openings in a house. Sleep under mosquito nets. Keep the nets in good repair by sewing up any holes big enough for a mosquito to get through.

Different kinds of mosquitoes carry different diseases. Some of these mosquitoes are active during the day, and some are active at night. After dark, wear clothes that cover your arms and legs to protect from mosquito bites. If it is available, wear mosquito repellent on your skin or clothes.

Mosquitoes breed in standing water. Cover containers that can fill with water or turn them upside down. If possible, fill in holes in the ground so rainwater does not make puddles.

Have the children stand and find partners. While standing, they will share with their partners everything they have learned about worms, malaria, and dengue. They should include how to prevent these illnesses and the symptoms of each illness. Have them sit down when they are done sharing.

Optional: If you are using Student Pages, the children can draw ways to prevent health concerns, such as worms, malaria, dengue, and diarrhoea.

3. Responding: Practice prevention behaviours for health concerns.

The children will now practice the prevention behaviours they have learned in the past few weeks. The purpose of this fun, guided play is to allow the children to practice prevention behaviours and learn from their mistakes. If possible, do this activity outside.

If possible, use a stick to draw 2 circles in the dirt. One will be a clean water source, and the other will be a dirty water source. Do not tell the children which is dirty or clean. If you are doing this activity inside, use a string or rope to make the circles.

Divide the children into 3 groups. Give each group the following supplies and explain what they are:

Empty container to collect water

Stone to use as soap

Large stones to use as vegetables

A cup and plate or leaves to use as a cup and plate

Rags to use as a mosquito net

Your group will pretend to be a family. Choose a nearby space to set up your pretend home with a cooking area and a sleeping area. I will call out 3 tasks, and you will use the supplies to complete the task. Try to use as many of the health tips you have learned as you can. You must work together quickly and quietly because you will only have 2 minutes to complete each task.

After allowing the children about 2 minutes to set up their home sites, point out the 2 water sources. Pretend to bathe in one of them. Then call out the following activities.

Task 1: Collect and store water

Each group must choose someone to collect water from a water source using the container, take it home, and store it as safely as you can.

After the children have collected and stored the water, ask them to describe the prevention behaviours that they used. Mention the following if they do not:

Used a clean container

Went to a clean water source (describe why it was clean)

Collected the water without putting their fingers in it

Stored the water and covered it

Task 2: Food handling

Two children in each group will prepare a dinner of vegetables and a cup of water for the other group members. The others will sit and pretend to eat and drink.

After the task, ask the children to describe the prevention behaviours that they used. Be sure all the following behaviours are mentioned:

- Used clean cup and plate
- Washed the vegetables
- (Pretended to) boil the water or got it from a clean source before drinking it
- Washed hands with soap before preparing dinner
- Washed hands before eating dinner

Task 3: Protection from mosquitoes

Pretend that it is evening and you are preparing for bed. Use prevention behaviours to prepare for and get into bed.

Following the task, ask the children to describe the prevention behaviours that they used. Be sure to discuss the following activities:

- Closed any doors and windows
- Covered sleeping area with mosquito net
- Sprayed repellent on clothes

Clap for all the great prevention tips the children remembered and practiced.

Many people get sick and even die because they do not have access to clean water or do not know about the prevention behaviours you have been learning. Someday you may have the opportunity to share these prevention skills with others.

In your small group, pray and thank God for the things you have learned. You can have 1 child pray, or you can take turns praying. If you do not know how to start, try these simple words: "God, thank you for ..."

May God give you opportunities to share what you learned today with others so that lives are saved from disease. Remember, as you share this knowledge, you are sharing God's love.

If you are using the Memory Verse Poster, show it to the students.

After a few minutes, read Psalm 41:3 as a blessing over the class.

Blessing: May the Lord help you remember all you have learned the last few weeks. May you know that if you get sick, He will help you on your sickbed.

Lead the children in singing this quarter's song, if possible.

"My Lighthouse" by Rend Collective: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HA8VtUPgqTc>