

# MN Malaria Stories: Make a travel clinic appointment

## SIMONE ABRAHAM'S TRANSCRIPT

Every summer break, I travel back home to Liberia to visit my dad. These long trips to visit friends and family were very special to me because I only got to see them once a year. I always look forward to spending time with my dad, playing outside with my cousins, and getting fruits and food from the local markets.

Growing up, I traveled with my mom and sister, and we would go to a travel clinic to get vaccines and pills a couple weeks before our trips. But when I was 9, I went to Liberia alone and wasn't able to go to the clinic before leaving the U.S.

While staying in Liberia we didn't have bed nets, but I know we used bug spray outside and indoors to prevent mosquito bites.

At the end of my summer in Liberia, I felt like I had a cold. I didn't feel good, but I was still a little active and played outside with my cousins because I didn't want to miss out on the fun. The next day, I remember I woke up sweating, feeling so cold, and yet it was 75 degrees. I told myself, "of course I'm sweating because I'm in Africa." When I went to tell my dad that I felt off, I fainted.

At the clinic, the doctor checked my vitals, drew some blood, and then told me I had malaria. I had to go to the clinic every day for a week to get shots, which upset me. On the fourth day I felt better, but they insisted that I return and complete all the shots.

Because I was so sick, I had to stay in Liberia longer, and I missed my flight back to the U.S. I was devastated to miss the first week of fourth grade. I really enjoy school and I have never missed a day before. I have always been the type of student who gets excited to go back to school and strives for perfect attendance.

I was lucky to get early and good treatment, but I wish I had known that taking medicine is necessary every time you travel to places with malaria. Now, I make a travel clinic appointment to get shots and medicine before every trip to Liberia.

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