

BRAZIL



The Federative Republic of Brazil shares borders with all the countries of South America, except Ecuador and Chile. It has a constitutional system of government, with a president as head of state.

HEALTH CONDITIONS AND PROBLEMS

COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

MALARIA

Malaria is endemic throughout the Brazilian Amazon region, which encompasses the whole of the North and parts of the states of Maranhão (Northeast) and Mato Grosso (Center-West). More than 99% of the cases reported in the last 10 years occurred in this area, where the annual average number of positive exams was 530,000. The incidence of malaria surged in this area in 1999, returning to 1970s levels. Some 632,600 new cases were reported—34% more than in 1998—resulting in 21,100 hospitalizations, mainly of adult and adolescent males aged 15–34. The high endemicity of malaria in the Amazon region is related to changes in extractive activities, which lead to internal migration and the establishment of unplanned rural settlements. In 2000, the Ministry of Health launched the Plan for Intensification of Malaria Control Activities in the Amazon Region (PIACM), which facilitated a restructuring of local health services designed to include malaria control in the network of health services, employing a strategy that emphasizes early diagnosis and immediate treatment. By the end of 2002, the number of malaria cases had decreased 45% in comparison to 1999. In 2003, the Ministry of Health introduced the National Malaria Control Program (PNCM) with a view to maintaining the successes achieved under the PIACM through strengthening of the structure of services. Despite all the resources invested, however, the number of cases rose 17.3% (408,795 cases) from 2002 to 2003. The number continued to rise in 2004 (464,231 cases, an increase of 13.6% over 2003) and in 2005 (599,690 cases, 29.2% higher than in the previous year). The increase in malaria cases is due mainly to intensive and unplanned growth of the peripheral areas surrounding the major cities¹.

¹ Excerpted from Pan American Health Organization. 2007. Health in the Americas, 2007. Volume II – Countries. Brazil. p. 139. Washington, D.C.: PAHO.