

COLOMBIA



Colombia has a land area of 1,141,910 km² with a topographic profile defined by three branchings of the Andes mountain range. It has 1,098 municipalities, which are divided into 32 departments, 4 districts (the Capital District of Bogotá, Barranquilla, Cartagena, and Santa Marta), and the San Andrés and Providencia Archipelago. A 2005 population census registered 41,242,948 inhabitants (1). Bogotá, with 6,776,009 people, is the most populated city and, together with Barranquilla, Cali, and Medellín, accounts for 29.5% of the country's inhabitants. The population is predominantly urban (72% live in administrative centers) (2), and the population density stands at 36.2 inhabitants per km² (1).

HEALTH CONDITIONS AND PROBLEMS

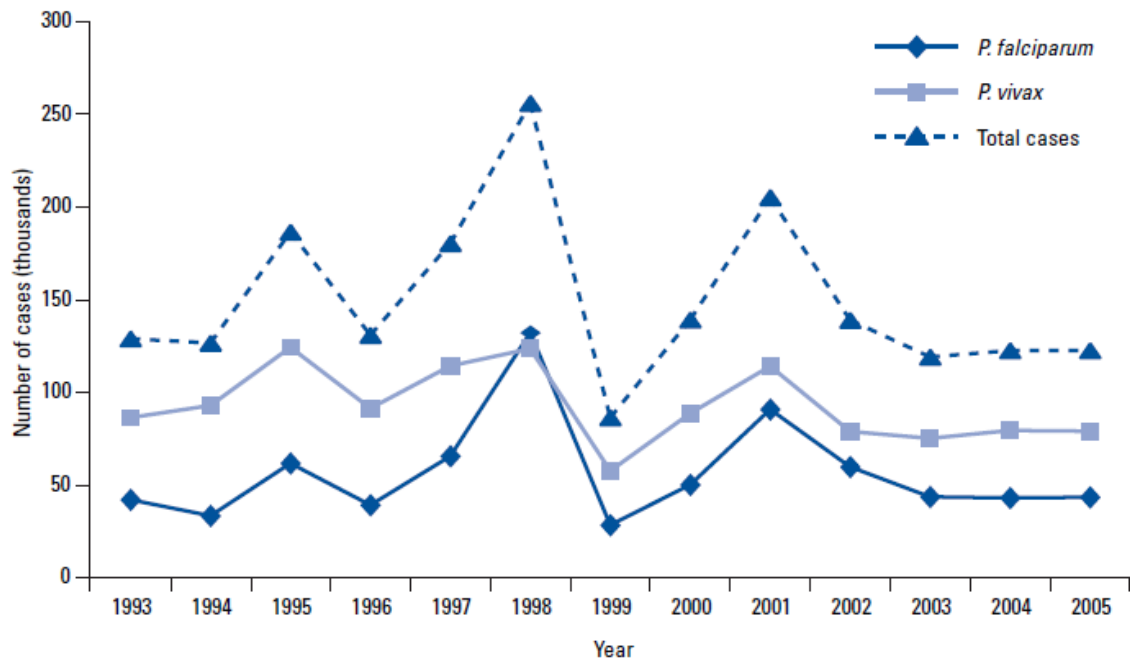
COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

MALARIA

Over the past three decades, malaria morbidity has shown an increasing trend, with an annual average of 142,297 cases recorded between 2001 and 2005; in 60% of the cases *Plasmodium vivax* was the etiological agent, in 38% it was *P. falciparum*, and 2% of the cases were mixed infections (Figure 4). In 2005, the annual parasite index (API) was 14.5 per 1,000 population. The region encompassing Alto Sinú, Bajo Cauca, and Urabá had the highest API that year (26 per 1,000 population). Around 60% of all malaria cases were concentrated in 27 municipalities of the departments of Antioquia, Córdoba, and Nariño. Males aged 15–44 were the most affected population group. Mortality from malaria also follows an ascending trend in the country, with an annual average of 130–150 deaths; under-registration, however, is considered to be close to 70% (30). Due to the growing problem of resistance to amodiaquine and sulfapyrimethamine used to treat uncomplicated *P. falciparum* malaria, artemisinin-based combination treatments were introduced in 2006¹.

¹ Excerpted from Pan American Health Organization. 2007. Health in the Americas, 2007. Volume II – Countries. Colombia. p. 225. Washington, D.C.: PAHO.

FIGURE 4. Malaria cases by *Plasmodium* species, Colombia, 1993–2005.



Source: Ministerio de la Protección Social, Grupo ETV.