

Lolita and
Maria Say
"No More
Malaria!"



Published by:
The Guyana Book Foundation
216 Almond Street
Queenstown, Guyana
South America

With support from:
The Canadian Organization for
Development through Education (CODE)
and
The Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA)

In association with:
U.S. Peace Corps, Guyana
and
Iwokrama International Centre
for Rain Forest Conservation and Development

Text and illustrations by Liz Schuster,
Layout and design by Samantha James, Iwokrama

Printing by F & H
Guyana

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INTRODUCTION

Say hello to Lolita and Maria! They and their friend Ricky have lots to say to you.

The children in these books pose the essential questions and their teacher, health worker, and peers discuss the issues, work through the problems and try to answer the questions. The theme here is learning by doing—doing the right things to keep clean, eat well, have clean teeth, prevent malaria, avoid AIDS, alcoholism, and diarrhoea.

This series of booklets is first of all, a gift to the children, youth and community of Annai in the North Rupununi District of Guyana from Liz Schuster, a Peace Corps Volunteer and the creator of the booklets. Her work was related to primary health care and outreach and she was formally attached to the Ministry of Health's local health centre in Annai from 1999-2001.

Iwokrama is particularly pleased to have been able to help bring these books to life by supporting Liz and her Peace Corps colleague Linda Bueno in their community development and outreach work in Fair View village. Samantha James, Information Specialist of Iwokrama, assisted by Ramona Zephyr, meticulously rendered the stories into digital format and helped enhance the design, colour and general layout of the text. The Guyana Book Foundation has played a key role, too, by covering the costs of printing and distribution to hinterland schools throughout Guyana. Leila Jagdeo, the manager, has been an anchor of the project in this regard.

The books can be used in a variety of creative ways to help spread the health messages. The youths of Annai, for example, could adapt the stories to be aired on their community based radio station, Radio Paiwomak. Villagers anywhere could make quizzes and skits to reinforce the themes for community and classroom use. The booklets, in and of themselves are delightful, authentic and useful for young and old alike. We urge children and teachers to keep them off the shelves and firmly placed in the hands of pupils. Books are not ornaments, and these particular books are to be read and re-read and used and re-used and put into practice by all of us who get the chance to read and hear what Lolita and Maria have to say.

Vanda Radzik,
Community Development Fellow, Iwokrama

Lolita was not at school today. Her best friend, Maria, goes to her house to see what is wrong.



Lolita is sick.



At first Lolita felt very cold. She was so cold she was shaking. Later she began to feel very hot.



She had a high fever, she felt weak, and her skin looked red.

Now she is sweating, but the fever is going away. Her father is also sick.



Maria talks to the health worker about this sickness. She learns that Lolita and her father may have MALARIA.



They have to do a blood smear to be sure.

Yes, it is true! Lolita and her father both have Malaria. It is very important that they take all of their treatment.

Even when the fever goes down, they must keep taking the medicine.



Malaria is spread by mosquitoes. Lolita's father may have been bitten by an infected mosquito in the bush. Then a mosquito that bit him may have bitten Lolita and given her the sickness, too.



If they don't finish their treatment, they can spread malaria to even more people.



Lolita does not want to get malaria again, and she does not want her friends to get it either.



She and Maria teach the others to try their best not to get mosquito bites.

To avoid getting bites, they can wear long sleeves and pants at night.



They can sleep under a mosquito net and remember that a treated net is even better.





They can use
smoke pots
to keep
mosquitoes
away.



They can avoid bathing at
sunrise and sunset.



Covering all water
containers is good, too.



And finally, Lolita and Maria tell their friends to get a blood smear when they have a fever.



Getting early treatment for malaria may save others from getting sick!

Acknowledgements

The author would like to acknowledge that the ideas for the text and drawings of this story were drawn from everyday experiences of living and working in Annai Village, as well as from the following sources:

Werner, D., Thuman, C., Maxwell, J., (1992) *Where There Is No Doctor*. Hesperian Foundation, California.

Baha'i booklet #4, *Malaria*.

Amerindian Research Unit, (1993) *What to Know and What To Do To Break the Chain of Malaria Infection*. Guyana, University of Guyana for Vector Control Service, Ministry of Health.

This story is the result of an effort to compile information available in Guyana and to build upon it by placing it in a more localized Amerindian context. It is hoped that the simple language and drawings will attract the interest of children and those beginning to read.

Text and drawings by Liz Schuster, Peace Corps Volunteer (1999-2001), Annai Village, North Rupununi, Guyana.

Layout and design by Samantha James, Iwokrama International Centre for Rain Forest Conservation and Development.

Special thanks to Vanda Radzik, Janette Forte, Juliet and René Van Dongon, Terrence Simmons, Leila Jagdeo and Eugene Xavier for their support in the creation and production of this story.



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