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## **Malaria surveillance in Coimbatore**

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COIMBATORE: The Coimbatore Corporation is carrying out surveillance for malaria after two cases were detected at Ramanathapuram in the city, one at Ganeshapuram and the other at Bharathi Nagar.

Both areas have been found to be vulnerable to diseases caused by a virus or parasite transmitted by mosquitoes – such as malaria, dengue and chikungunya – because of drinking water being stored in open containers. The anopheles mosquito transmits the malaria-causing parasite plasmodium. Though both the victims in the city were said to have picked up the disease in Chennai, the Corporation is not taking any chances. The health wing of the civic body is keeping a vigil in the places where the persons affected by malaria live.

“We’ve collected blood smears from the family members and from 1,000 persons in the areas,” says Assistant City Health Officer R. Sumathi. Official figures of mosquito and larvae density in these areas spell safety.

The house index is 9.7 mosquitoes and the container index is 8.1 (container index refers to mosquitoes found in vessels filled with fresh water).

Figures up to 10 are considered safe. Of the 143 houses surveyed in these areas, 14 were found to be positive with more than 20 mosquitoes in each.

Of the 173 containers checked, 21 had larvae levels beyond the safe limit.

Though the house and container index counts suggest there is no need for alarm, there are indications that these figures do not reflect the actual situation.