

	P. falciparum	P. vivax
Trophozoites	Always present in peripheral blood. Ring-shaped, small to medium size in dimension (μ = 2-4 mm) depending on maturation. Young form may lay in marginal position. Polyparasitism and double chromatin dots possible	Polymorphous in shape from large ring forms younger forms) to ameboid mass occupying the entire red blood cell (mature forms).
Schizonts	Solely present in more severe infections. Small and compact, containing 15 to 30 merozoites and a dense dark brown pigmented residual body.	Normally present in peripheral blood. Large (μ = 12-16 mm), round bodies containing 12 to 24 merozoites and loose golden brown residual pigmentation.
Gametocytes	Present in the second phase of the erythrocytic cycle. Crescent-shaped with coarse rice-like granules and pigment. The female is blue in colour and granules are in central position, while the male form is violet and granules are scattered over the parasite.	Round regular bodies with a single voluminous nucleus (dense and red purple in female gametocytes, loose and pink in male forms).
Parasitic density	May be very high (average 20-500.000, max 2.000.000)	Intermediate level (average 20.0000, max 50.000)

P. ovale	P. malariae
<p>Polymorphous in shape from ring forms often showing a central clear vacuole surrounded by regular cytoplasm (younger forms) to large ameboid masses (mature forms). Their imensions are slightly inferior to P.vivax.</p>	<p>Ring form,small and regular in shape, with no pseudopodes. Older forms may be large, with vacuole Occasionally, equatorial band form present.</p>
<p>Normally present in peripheral blood. Large (μ = 10-12 mm), round bodies containing 4 to 12 merozoites and dark pigmentation.</p>	<p>Compact, rosetta-like forms with 8-10 merozoites surrounding a central pigmented area</p>
<p>Round regular bodies with a single voluminous nucleus (dense and red purple in female gametocytes, loose and pink in male forms). Their dimensions are usually inferior than in P.viax.</p>	<p>Compact large single dense purple nucleus (female form) or loose violet nucleus (male form). Scattered coarse pigment granules are present.</p>
<p>Usually moderate (average 9.000, max 30.000)</p>	<p>Usually very low (average 6.000, max 20.000)</p>