

The most common medical problems encountered by travelers after their return home are diarrhea, fever, respiratory illnesses, and skin diseases (Fig. 149-2). Frequently ignored problems are fatigue and emotional stress, especially in long-stay travelers. The approach to diagnosis requires some knowledge of geographic medicine, in

particular the epidemiology and clinical presentation of infectious disorders. A geographic history should focus on the traveler's exact itinerary, including dates of arrival and departure; exposure history (food indiscretions, drinking-water sources, freshwater contact, sexual activity, animal contact, insect bites); location and style of travel (urban vs. rural, first-class hotel accommodation vs. camping); immunization history; and use of antimalarial chemosuppression. Recently,

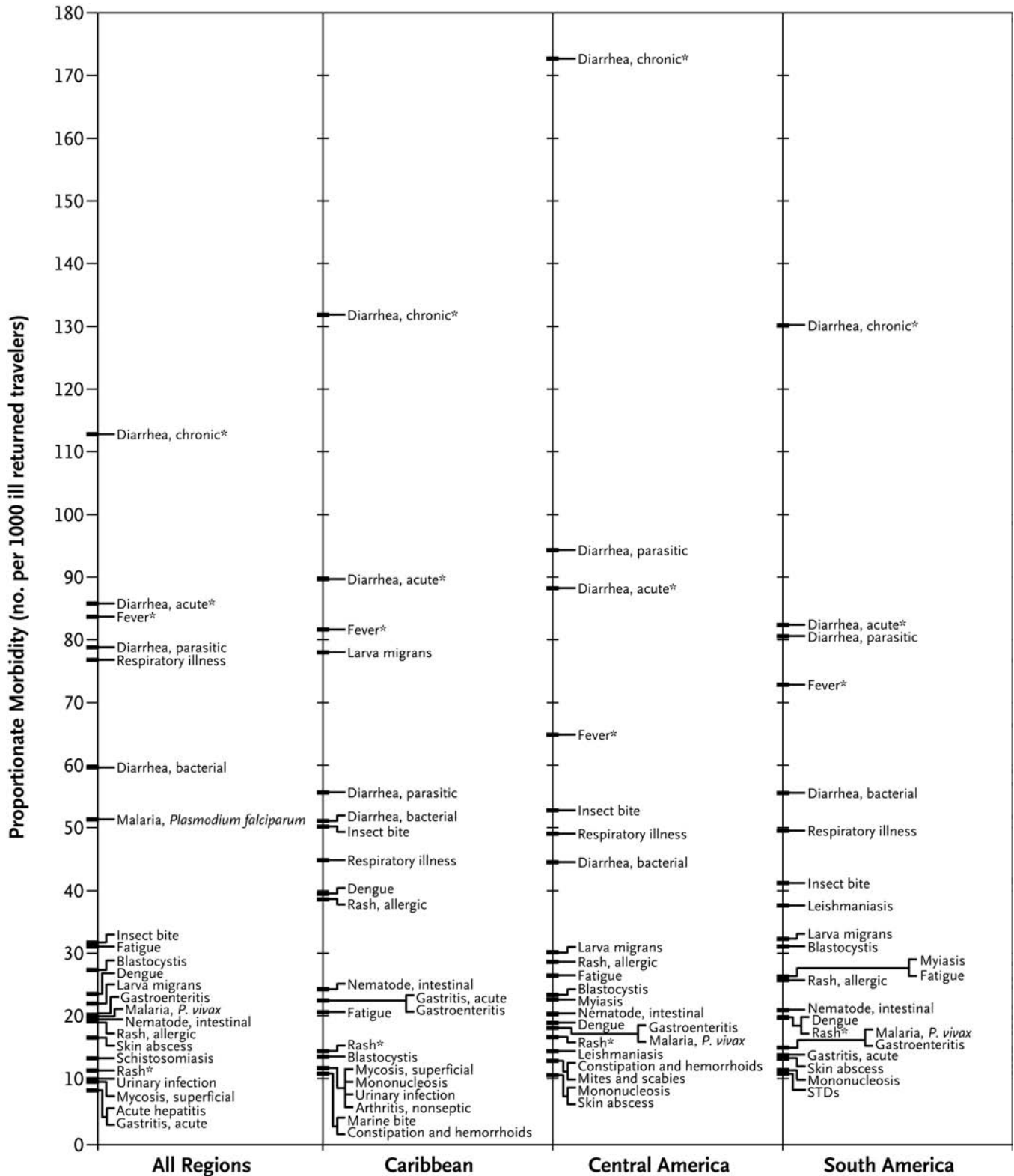


FIGURE 149-2 Proportionate morbidity among ill travelers returning from the developing world, according to region of travel. The proportions (not incidence rates) are shown for each of the top 22 specific diagnoses among all ill returned travelers within each region. STDs, sexually transmitted diseases. Asterisks indicate syndromic diagnoses for which specific etiologies could not be assigned. (Reprinted from DO Freedman et al: *N Engl J Med* 354:119, 2006.)