

## DENGUE VIRUS

<b>What is dengue virus?</b>	<p>This is a disease caused by the dengue virus transmitted by mosquitoes of the genus <i>Aedes</i>.</p> <p>Dengue is found in tropical and sub-tropical regions worldwide and is endemic in the Caribbean.</p> <p>There are four serotypes of the virus (DENV1, DENV2, DENV3 and DENV4) all of which can be found in the Caribbean.</p>
<b>How is dengue virus transmitted?</b>	<p>The main route of transmission is through the bite of the <i>Aedes aegypti</i> mosquito. About 4 days (can be 3-12 days) after being bitten by an infected mosquito the patient can start to exhibit the first signs and symptoms.</p>
<b>What are the main signs and symptoms of a dengue virus infection?</b>	<p>The symptoms of dengue fever are high fever, severe headache, severe pain behind the eyes, joint pain, muscle and bone pain, rash, and mild bleeding (e.g., nose or gums bleed, easy bruising). Generally, younger children and those with their first dengue infection have a milder illness than older children and adults.</p>
<b>Is there a treatment or vaccine for dengue virus?</b>	<p>There is no specific medicine or treatment for dengue virus infection. Your doctor may advise rest and drinking plenty of liquids, and will recommend appropriate medication for pain and fever. There is no vaccine for dengue virus yet.</p>
<b>How severe is the disease?</b>	<p>Dengue can potentially develop into a lethal complication known as severe dengue, formerly referred to as Dengue Haemorrhagic fever.</p> <p>Severe dengue is one of the leading causes of serious illness and death among children in some Asian, Latin American and Caribbean countries. The risk of developing severe dengue is increased when one recovers from an infection resulting from a specific serotype and is then subsequently infected by other serotypes.</p>
<b>What can I do to protect myself and my family?</b>	<p>Prevention and control measures are the same as for chikungunya and zika.</p> <p>Do everything you can to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• reduce mosquito breeding;</li> <li>• keep mosquitoes out of your house; and,</li> <li>• prevent them from biting you and your loved ones.</li> </ul> <p>The mosquitoes that carry the dengue virus are the same ones that carry chikungunya and zika. The mosquitoes breed in anything which can hold water including discarded tyres, tin cans, bottles, flower pots, storage jars, cooling systems and manhole covers. The mosquito can rest in and around houses, schools, hospitals and other areas where it is dark, cool and shaded.</p> <p>Spend 10 minutes once a week to check around the house and yard to eliminate water sources that can provide breeding sites for mosquitoes. You should also check for clogged gutters on roofs, and trim weeds and tall grasses.</p> <p>Prevent indoor mosquito bites by screening windows, keeping windows closed, sleeping under a bednet during the day, wearing long sleeve clothing during the day when mosquitoes are most active, and by using repellents applied to exposed skin or clothing.</p>
<b>If I am bitten, how do I prevent other members of my family from becoming infected?</b>	<p>If you are infected, you should avoid being bitten by the <i>Aedes</i> mosquitoes during the first week of illness. Staying under a bednet, or remaining in a place with intact window/door screens is recommended. Also protect against mosquito bites by using insect repellent and wearing long sleeves and pants.</p>

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