



Chikungunya

What is Chikungunya?

Chikungunya is a viral disease that is transmitted to people by mosquitoes. It has occurred in Africa, Southern Europe, Southeast Asia, and islands in the Indian and Pacific Oceans. In late 2013, chikungunya was found for the first time on islands in the Caribbean Countries with reported local transmission.

How is it spread?

The virus is spread mainly by the bites of infected *Aedes* mosquitoes. An *Aedes* mosquito would have to bite a person with chikungunya to become infected itself.

These mosquito types are characterized by white stripes on their black bodies and legs.

These mosquitoes bite mostly during the daytime.

What is the incubation period?

Symptoms usually begin 3–7 days after being bitten by an infected mosquito.

What are the signs and symptoms?

The most common symptoms are fever and severe joint pains, often in the hands and feet. Other symptoms may include headache, muscle pain, joint swelling, or rash.

People at increased risk for severe disease include newborns exposed during delivery, older adults (≥65 years), and people with medical conditions such as high blood pressure, diabetes, or heart disease. Deaths are rare.

How long do symptoms last?

Most people feel better within a week. Some people may develop longer-term joint pain.

How is Chikungunya treated?

No medication is currently available to cure the infection; only symptomatic treatment is available.

How can I protect myself from Chikungunya?

There is no vaccine or medication to prevent chikungunya virus infection or disease. It is advised to:

- Reduce mosquito exposure.
 - Use air conditioning (mosquitoes do not like cold temperatures) or window/door screens.
 - Use mosquito repellents on exposed skin.
 - Wear long-sleeved shirts and long pants.
 - Wear permethrin-treated clothing.
 - Empty standing water from outdoor containers.
 - Support local vector control programs.
- People at increased risk for severe disease should consider not travelling to areas with ongoing chikungunya outbreaks.
- If you are sick with chikungunya, avoiding mosquito bites will help prevent further spread of the virus.

Adapted from:

Chikungunya: Information for the general public. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2014. Retrieved from http://www.cdc.gov/chikungunya/pdfs/CHIKV_FACT%20SHEET_CDC_General%20Public_cleared.pdf accessed May 19 2014

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