

Dengue Fact Sheet

What is dengue?

Dengue is a disease caused by any one of four closely related dengue viruses (DENV-1, DENV-2, DENV-3, and DENV-4).

Where does dengue occur?

Dengue occurs in many tropical and sub-tropical areas of the world, particularly sub-Saharan Africa, the Middle East, Southeast Asia, and Central and South America. With the exception of Mexico, Puerto Rico, small areas in southern Texas and southern Florida, and some regions of Hawaii, dengue transmission does not occur in North America. Worldwide there are an estimated 50 to 100 million cases of dengue per year.

How do people get dengue?

People get dengue from the bite of an infected mosquito. The mosquito becomes infected when it bites a person who has dengue virus in their blood. It takes a week or more for the dengue organisms to mature in the mosquito; then the mosquito can transmit the virus to another person when it bites. Dengue is transmitted principally by *Aedes aegypti* (yellow fever mosquito) and *Aedes albopictus* (Asian tiger mosquito). These mosquitoes are not native to California, but infestations have been identified in [multiple counties in California](#). Dengue virus cannot be transmitted from person to person.

What are the symptoms of dengue?

There are two types of illness that can result from infection with a dengue virus: dengue and severe dengue.

The main symptoms of dengue are high fever, severe headache, severe pain behind the eyes, joint pain, muscle and bone pain, rash, bruising, and may include mild bleeding from the nose or mouth. Generally, younger children and those with their first dengue infection have a milder illness than older children and adults.

Severe dengue typically begins with signs and symptoms similar to dengue. Rather than recover, severe dengue patients proceed to experience more bleeding, severe pain in the abdomen, respiratory distress, and fluid accumulation in the abdomen and around the lungs as the smallest blood vessels (capillaries) begin to leak. If not treated, severe dengue can result in death.

How is dengue treated?

There is no specific treatment for dengue infection. Rest and fluids are generally sufficient for persons with dengue. Severe dengue may require hospitalization and intensive medical care.

What can people do to keep from getting dengue?

Travelers to dengue areas need to reduce their likelihood of being bitten by mosquitoes. Screens on windows and doors should be examined to confirm that they are in good

repair. Repellents containing 20% to 30% DEET should be applied to exposed skin and clothing to keep mosquitoes from biting. There is no vaccine to prevent dengue.

Where can I find more information about dengue?

Visit [California Department of Public Health's *Aedes aegypti* and *Aedes albopictus* website](https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/Aedes-aegypti-and-Aedes-albopictus-mosquitoes.aspx) (<https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/Aedes-aegypti-and-Aedes-albopictus-mosquitoes.aspx>).

Visit the [U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention dengue website](http://www.cdc.gov/dengue/) (<http://www.cdc.gov/dengue/>).

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