

DENGUE FEVER

Dengue is a mosquito-borne viral disease that is widespread in many parts of the world especially in tropical and sub-tropical climates. Dengue fever in some cases can be fatal.

KEY FACTS

Dengue fever:

- is a viral infection spread by mosquitoes. It is widespread in many parts of the world and is found in tropical and sub-tropical climates worldwide, mostly in urban and semi-urban areas.
- The virus responsible for causing Dengue, is called Dengue virus (DENV). There are four DENV serotypes, meaning that it is possible to be infected four times.
- Mosquitoes bite during the day, usually early in the morning or in the early evening before dusk.
- Infection is usually mild and passes after about 1 week without causing any lasting problems. But in rare cases it can be very serious and potentially life threatening.
- There is no specific treatment or widely available vaccine for Dengue, so it is important to avoid being bitten by mosquitoes when visiting an area where the infection is found.
- The global incidence of Dengue has grown dramatically in recent decades. About half of the world's population is now at risk and there are an estimated 100-400 million infections each year.

HEALTH RISKS

- Dengue causes a wide spectrum of disease. This can range from subclinical disease where people are not aware of infection to severe flu-like symptoms.



- Although less common, some people develop severe Dengue, which can be any number of complications associated with severe bleeding, organ impairment.
- Severe Dengue has a higher risk of death when not managed appropriately. Severe Dengue affects most Asian and Latin American countries and has become a leading cause of hospitalization and death among children and adults in these regions.

SYMPTOMS

- Symptoms usually develop suddenly, about 5 to 8 days after you become infected. The symptoms normally pass after about 1 week, although you may feel tired and unwell for several weeks afterwards.
- Symptoms include a high temperature, feeling hot or shivery, severe headache, muscle/joint pain and pain behind eyes.
- Symptoms can also include a widespread red rash, tummy pain and loss of appetite.

- In rare cases Dengue can be very serious and potentially life threatening. This is known as severe Dengue or Dengue haemorrhagic fever. People who have had Dengue before are thought to be most at risk of severe Dengue if they become infected again.
- Signs of severe Dengue can include severe tummy pain with swollen tummy, vomiting blood and bleeding gums or bleeding under the skin.

TREATMENT

There is no cure or specific treatment for Dengue. Treatment is directed primarily at relieving the symptoms. If you get infected by the virus:

- Take plenty of rest.
- Drink fluids to prevent dehydration. If you're currently abroad, if possible, only drink bottled water from a bottle that was properly sealed.
- Take medicine such as acetaminophen or paracetamol to reduce fever and pain.
- Do not take aspirin and other non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs until Dengue can be ruled out to reduce the risk of bleeding.
- If you are taking medicine for another medical condition, talk to your healthcare provider before taking additional medication.
- You should start to feel better after in 1 week, although it may take few weeks to feel your normal self again. Get medical advice if your symptoms persist.
- For severe Dengue, medical care by physicians and nurses experienced with the effects and progression of the disease can save lives.

PREVENTION

The best way to prevent Dengue – and other diseases that are transmitted by mosquitos – is by preventing mosquito bites when you travel to one of the infection countries:

- Use insect repellent. Do not spray repellent on the skin under clothing.
- If you are also using sunscreen, apply sunscreen first and insect repellent second.
- Wear loose but protective clothes – mosquito can bite through tight-fitting cloths. Trousers, full sleeve and preferably light-coloured that cover as much of the body are the best.
- Use physical barriers such as screens, closed doors and windows and sleep under mosquito nets.
- Empty, clean or cover containers that hold water – such as buckets – so that places where mosquitoes can breed are removed.

Additional health information to transport workers who travels in between countries

Dengue fever infection rates vary in different parts of the world. Many transport workers travel beyond national boundaries. If you are in a country, where there is an outbreak of Dengue; you need to be extra careful and protect yourself.

As medical advancement is always happening the ITF will periodically update this information, as necessary. You can also keep yourself updated on Dengue infection from WHO website at: <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/dengue-and-severe-dengue>



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