

Dengue Fever

FACTSHEET

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What is Dengue Fever?

Dengue Fever is a viral disease carried by a mosquito. This disease is mainly seen in tropical countries located in Asia, China, Indonesia, Philippines, South America, etc. Occasionally residents or visitors from these countries may arrive in the United States already sick with the disease.

Who gets Dengue Fever?

People of all ages who are exposed to infected mosquitoes can get Dengue Fever. The disease occurs most often during the rainy season in areas with high numbers of infected mosquitoes.

What are the symptoms of Dengue Fever?

The symptoms of Dengue Fever are characterized by the sudden onset of a fever that may last from five to seven days with intense headache, joint and muscle pain and a rash. The rash develops on the feet or on the legs three to four days after the beginning of the fever. The hemorrhagic form of Dengue Fever is more serious and is associated with loss of appetite, vomiting, high fever, and abdominal pain. This form of Dengue Fever can lead to shock, bleeding and can be fatal.

How is Dengue Fever spread?

Dengue Fever is spread by the bite of an infected mosquito. It cannot be spread from person to person.

How soon do symptoms appear?

The symptoms may occur from three to fourteen days after exposure but most frequently four to seven days after exposure to the infected mosquito's bite.

Is a person with Dengue Fever contagious?

No, a person with Dengue Fever is not contagious. The disease can only be transmitted from the bite of an infected mosquito.

How is Dengue Fever treated?

Since Dengue Fever is caused by a virus, antibiotics do not help in the treatment of the disease. There is no specific treatment for the disease. Your healthcare provider will recommend supportive care measures such as fluid replacement, rest and hospitalization. You should avoid products that contain aspirin.

How can Dengue Fever be prevented?

Dengue Fever can be prevented by advising travelers to affected areas to minimize their exposure to mosquitoes. This can be done with the use of insect repellents and mosquito netting.

Want more information?

Information about Dengue Fever and other related health topics can be found at the website www.cdc.gov. The DC Department of Health promotes the health and safety of the District residents. For additional information, please call 202-442-9371.

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