



Chikungunya

What is chikungunya?

Chikungunya (pronounced: chik-en-gun-ye) is a virus spread to people by mosquitoes. Chikungunya has been found in countries all over the world. At this time, mosquitoes in the United States do not carry chikungunya, but travelers to other countries or family members in other countries may be at risk. These countries include Brazil, Colombia, Dominican Republic and Haiti. It is possible that chikungunya will spread to mosquitoes in new areas, including the United States. For the most up-to-date information of where Chikungunya is found, visit: <http://www.cdc.gov/chikungunya/geo/index.html>

How is chikungunya spread?

Chikungunya is spread to people through a mosquito bite. Mosquitoes get chikungunya when they bite a person who is already sick. The mosquitoes that spread chikungunya usually bite during the day (many other mosquitoes that can spread diseases are most active from early evening to early morning).

What are symptoms of chikungunya?

Symptoms usually develop 3-7 days after being bitten by a mosquito. Symptoms include fever, joint pain, headache, muscle pain, joint swelling, or rash. Most people will develop some symptoms, usually fever and joint pain. Although chikungunya rarely results in death, symptoms can become severe. Most people will get better within one week, but joint pain can last for months.

How is chikungunya diagnosed?

If you develop symptoms as described above, see your health care provider immediately. Tell your health care provider if you have traveled recently. He or she may take a blood test to look for signs of chikungunya or other similar diseases.

How is chikungunya treated?

There is currently no treatment for chikungunya. Proper care can help relieve symptoms, including getting plenty of rest, drinking fluids to prevent dehydration, and some medication can help relieve fever and pain, including ibuprofen, naproxen, acetaminophen, or paracetamol.

Who is at risk for chikungunya?

Anyone who is exposed to mosquito bites in an area with chikungunya is at risk of getting sick. This includes anyone traveling to or living in countries in the Caribbean or South America. Newborns, persons 65 or older and people with medical conditions, such as high blood pressure, diabetes, or heart disease are more likely to have complications from chikungunya.

How do you prevent mosquito bites?

- Use a mosquito repellent. Repellents approved by the EPA include those containing DEET, oil of lemon eucalyptus, Picaridin or IR3535. Read the directions on the product label to find out about precautions that need to be taken and how long the product is effective.
- If you use a product containing DEET, do not use concentrations of more than 30% on adults and use low concentrations of DEET on children. Apply DEET to exposed skin (not eyes or mouth) and on clothes, but do not use on open cuts or wounds. Do not apply underneath clothes.
- Do not let children apply repellents to themselves. Apply the repellent to your hands and rub it on the child. Do not apply repellents to children's eyes, mouth, or hands and use cautiously

around ears. Do not apply DEET on infants (mosquito netting can be used over infant carriers) or oil of lemon eucalyptus on children under 3 years of age.

- When weather permits, wear protective clothing such as long-sleeved shirts, long pants, and socks.
- Use air conditioning or window/door screens to keep mosquitoes outside. If needed, sleep under a mosquito bed net.

How do you prevent mosquito breeding?

Mosquitoes need water to breed. Young mosquitoes (larvae) live in water before growing into adults that can fly. Items that collect water should be emptied at least once a week to prevent mosquito breeding.

- **Containers:** Turn over or cover unused flowerpots, buckets, garbage cans, and wheelbarrows. Change water in birdbaths once a week.
- **Gutters:** Remove leaves and other debris that can clog gutters and trap water.
- **Pools:** Cover unused swimming pools and turn over kiddie pools when not in use. Be sure to keep swimming pool covers clear of leaves and water. Keep large pools treated and circulating.
- **Old Tires:** Cover or dispose of them. They are a favorite mosquito-breeding site.

