



Chikungunya Virus (CHIKV)

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ's)

What is Chikungunya?

Chikungunya (pronounced chik-en-gun-ye) is a viral disease transmitted to humans through the bite of an infected mosquito.

What are the symptoms of Chikungunya?

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. Symptoms usually begin 3–7 days after being bitten by an infected mosquito and typically resolve within 7–10 days. Some people may develop long-term joint pain. For more information on symptoms please visit <http://www.cdc.gov/chikungunya/symptoms/index.html>.

Is Chikungunya dangerous?

The virus does not often result in death, but in severe cases it can be painful with symptoms lasting weeks or even years. Complications are rare, but more common in infants (<1 year), older adults (>65 years) and people with underlying medical conditions, such as hypertension, diabetes or heart disease.

How is Chikungunya spread?

Chikungunya is most often spread to people by *Aedes aegypti* and *Aedes albopictus* mosquitoes. These are the same mosquitoes that transmit the virus that causes Dengue Fever. They bite mostly during the daytime. If a person is infected and bitten by a mosquito, that mosquito may later spread the virus by biting another person.

What is my risk?

Travelers are at risk when visiting areas where Chikungunya occurs and in areas being affected by a Chikungunya outbreak. Two locally acquired cases of Chikungunya have been confirmed in Florida. A map of the Countries and territories where Chikungunya cases have been reported is available at <http://www.cdc.gov/chikungunya/geo/index.html>.

What should I do if I think I have Chikungunya virus?

See your doctor if you think you or a family member might have Chikungunya. Your doctor may order blood tests which would likely include tests for both Chikungunya and Dengue Fever, especially if you recently traveled to the Caribbean or South America. Dengue Fever is another mosquito-borne illness similar to Chikungunya.

What should I do if I have Chikungunya virus?

Protect yourself against further mosquito bites. Stay indoors until one week after your fever started. If you get bitten by a mosquito during this time, the mosquito may bite another person and make them sick. If you must go out, wear long sleeves and pants and mosquito repellent to help protect others from illness.

How is Chikungunya treated?

There are no specific medicines for this virus. Consult your doctor before taking medication to relieve fever and pain. Aspirin or other NSAIDs (e.g., ibuprofen, naproxen, toradol) are not recommended for Dengue fever, an illness similar to Chikungunya, please consult your physician first.

What are some ways to prevent Chikungunya virus?

Since there is no vaccine to prevent Chikungunya virus, the best way to prevent illness is to prevent mosquito bites:

- Wear long-sleeved shirts and long pants.
- Use mosquito repellent on exposed skin.
- Use air conditioning and ensure window/door screens are intact.
- Prevent standing water to prevent mosquitoes.

What is Denton County doing about Chikungunya?

Denton County Health Department (DCHD) is working with the healthcare provider community to increase awareness, testing and reporting of Chikungunya in order to respond to any potential local spread. DCHD is continually monitoring local, national and worldwide trends to determine the risks to the public's health and pursuing vector control activities based on surveillance to reduce local impact.