

## Dengue

[What is Dengue?](#)

[What is my risk?](#)

[Can it be treated?](#)

[How can I reduce my risk?](#)

[Links](#)

### **What is Dengue?**

Dengue is a viral illness spread by day-biting mosquitoes. Symptoms include fever, headache, muscle ache, pain and a rash.

### **Where is it found?**

Dengue is common in parts of Africa, Asia, the Caribbean, Central and South America and the Western Pacific.

Dengue Risk Areas, 2009



■ Countries or areas where dengue has been reported

Note: Lines define the boundaries of year-round survival of the dengue mosquito vector, *Aedes aegypti*, and represents areas where dengue transmission is possible.

Acknowledgment: Adapted from World Health Organization.

### **How can I catch it?**

Dengue is spread by a day biting mosquito called *Aedes*. Your chance of being bitten is highest a couple of hours after sunrise and just before sunset, as these are the times when *Aedes* mosquitoes feed intensely.



Courtesy US CDC

## Signs and Symptoms:

- severe headache
- fever
- intense joint and muscle pain
- nausea and vomiting
- a red blanching rash

Symptoms usually appear five to eight days after you are bitten by an infected mosquito. Most infections clear upon their own within one to two weeks. However, sometimes a potentially lethal complication, called [dengue haemorrhagic fever](#) can develop. This mainly occurs in young children growing up in risk areas and can be fatal.

## What's my risk?

Research shows that living or spending long periods of time in tropical countries where dengue is common, especially during the transmission season, increases risk. However, even short-term visitors can be exposed – it only takes a single mosquito bite.

## Can it be treated?

There is no specific treatment for dengue. Getting plenty of rest and keeping up with fluids helps you recover. You can take painkillers, but avoid aspirin or ibuprofen, as they increase your risk of internal bleeding.

You must get urgent medical help if you see tiny blood spots or large patches of blood under your skin or if your gums or nose start bleeding. These can be signs of [dengue haemorrhagic fever](#) and urgent medical help is essential.

## How can I reduce my risk?

There is no vaccine to prevent dengue, so [avoiding mosquito bites](#) is the only way to prevent infection.

## Links:

[Centers for Disease Control/Health Map: Dengue Map.](#)

[Health Protection Agency: Dengue fever.](#)

[NHS Choices: Dengue](#)

[World Health Organization: Dengue and dengue haemorrhagic fever.](#)