

IDRS Infectious Disease Reporting System

Disease Reporting 24 Hours a Day

Columbus Public Health and Franklin County Public Health

YELLOW FEVER

Yellow fever is caused by the yellow fever virus which is carried by mosquitoes. It only occurs in Africa and South America. The last case of yellow fever in Ohio was in 1878.

Symptoms

Symptoms generally appear in 2 to 6 days of a mosquito bite and may include:

- Fever (often high)
- Headache, body aches
- Nausea and vomiting
- Sometimes, the illness seems to get better, and then comes back.
- Signs of serious, life-threatening illness include abnormal bleeding or bruising, yellow skin or eyes, or making less urine (pee) than usual.

Transmission

- Yellow fever is transmitted by the bite of an infected mosquito.
- There are two cycles of infection: one carried by monkeys and one by humans.
 - “Jungle yellow fever” mainly affects monkeys. People get it when they are bitten by mosquitoes that bit infected monkeys. This form is rare.
 - “Urban yellow fever” is a disease of humans. It is spread by mosquitoes that have been infected by biting other people. Urban yellow fever causes most yellow fever outbreaks and epidemics.
- Infants and children are at higher risk of getting yellow fever.

Treatment

- Blood can be tested for the virus or antibodies to it. Several tests are often needed for diagnosis.
- There is no specific treatment for yellow fever. A health care provider can help manage the symptoms and complications. Yellow fever can be fatal in approximately 60% of cases.
- A person with yellow fever should be kept away from mosquitoes for at least five days to limit spread.

Prevention

- Prevent mosquito bites, especially when traveling to areas where yellow fever is common. It only takes one bite from an infected mosquito to transmit disease.
 - Use mosquito repellents on skin and clothing, and sleep under bed nets or in screened areas.
 - If weather permits, wear long pants, long sleeves, and/or socks.
 - Stay in screened or air conditioned areas during peak mosquito biting times.
- The peak biting times for many mosquito species is dusk to dawn; however the type that carries Yellow Fever virus often feeds during the daytime. Take precaution during day and evening to prevent bites.
- A vaccine is available for people who are at risk for infection.

Additional Information

Yellow fever is a very rare cause of illness in travelers, but many countries have regulations and requirements for yellow fever vaccination that must be met prior to entering the country. Specific requirements identified country by country are available in the CDC publication “Health Information for International Travel.”

All information is general in nature and is not intended to be used as a substitute for appropriate professional advice.



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