

BACKGROUND

Yellow fever is a mosquito-borne viral disease. The disease occurs in certain tropical and subtropical areas. Anyone who is exposed to this virus can develop the disease. The bite of a certain type of mosquito, *Aedes aegypti*, is most often responsible for transmitting the virus.

WHO DOES THE ISSUE IMPACT?

The yellow fever virus is typically found in tropical and subtropical areas of Africa and South America; travelers should take prevention measures to avoid getting bit by mosquitoes in yellow fever endemic regions.

COMPLICATIONS

In severe cases, yellow fever can be deadly.

SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS

Most people will not have symptoms but those who do could experience the following:

- Sudden onset of fever
- Chills
- Severe headache
- Back pain
- General body aches
- Nausea
- Vomiting
- Fatigue (feeling tired)
- Weakness
- Most people with the initial symptoms improve within one week.
- For some people who recover, weakness and fatigue (feeling tired) might last several months

For one out of seven people who have the initial symptoms, there will be a brief remission that may last only a few hours or for a day, followed by a more severe form of the disease. Severe symptoms include:

- High fever
- Yellow skin (jaundice)
- Bleeding
- Shock
- Organ failure

CAUSES AND TRANSMISSION

Yellow fever virus is transmitted to people primarily through the bite of an infected mosquito. Mosquitoes acquire the virus by feeding on infected primates and then can transmit the virus to other primates. People infected with yellow fever virus are infectious to mosquitoes shortly before the onset of fever and up to five days after onset.

TESTS AND DIAGNOSIS

Yellow fever is diagnosed through a blood test that looks for evidence of the virus or the body's immune response against the infection. These tests are not widely available. Anyone who thinks they may be ill from this disease should seek health care immediately.

TREATMENTS

There is no specific treatment for yellow fever. However, yellow fever vaccine is effective and available. People traveling to areas where yellow fever may be present should be immunized.

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

To prevent Yellow Fever

- Get vaccinated before traveling (if vaccination is recommended for you)
- Use EPA approved insect repellent
- Wear long-sleeved shirts and pants to cover your skin
- Treat clothing and gear with an insecticide
- Sleep under a mosquito net
- Take steps to control mosquitoes indoors and outdoors by
 - Using screens on windows and doors and repairing holes
 - Using air conditioning
 - Stopping mosquitoes from laying eggs in or near water, i.e., dumping or draining items that hold water such as tires, buckets, planters, toys, pools, birdbaths, flowerpots, trash containers, etc.

If you or a family member might have yellow fever virus:

- See your healthcare provider if you develop any of the symptoms described for yellow fever virus; tell him or her about your travel

RESOURCES FOR MORE INFORMATION

PA DOH Vectorborne Disease webpage: [Vectorborne Diseases](#)

CDC Yellow Fever website: <https://www.cdc.gov/yellowfever/index.html>

This fact sheet provides general information. Please contact your physician for specific clinical information.

If you have any questions, contact us at 1-877-PA-HEALTH.

