

Dengue Fever - Information for Clinicians

Please contact XXX County Health Department (CHD) by the next business day if you suspect dengue to ensure prompt mosquito control efforts.

Dengue infection is caused by any of four distinct but closely related dengue virus (DENV) serotypes (called DENV-1, -2, -3, and -4). Dengue is currently the most frequent cause of acute febrile illness among returning U.S. travelers from the Caribbean, Central and South America, and Asia.

Transmission occurs through the bite of an infected mosquito. Dengue may also be transmitted from mother to fetus in utero or to neonate at parturition.

Incubation period is two to 14 days.

Clinical presentation can range from a mild non-specific febrile syndrome, to classic dengue fever or “break-bone fever”, or in the most severe forms of the disease (2-4% of cases), dengue hemorrhagic fever (DHF) and dengue shock syndrome (DSS). More than > 20% of cases may be asymptomatic.

Dengue should be considered when locally acquired infection is suspected, or in persons that live in or have traveled to a dengue endemic area in the two weeks prior to symptom onset **and have fever and two of the following signs and symptoms:**

- Headache or retro-orbital pain
- Myalgia, bone pain, and/or arthralgia
- Anorexia and nausea
- Rash
- Thrombocytopenia
- Leucopenia
- Hemorrhagic fever or shock symptoms may appear after a 2-7 day febrile phase and include abdominal pain or tenderness, persistent vomiting, mucosal bleeding, liver enlargement, clinical fluid accumulation, or laboratory results indicating an increase in hematocrit concurrent with a rapid decrease in platelets.

Patients at risk for severe disease:

Previously infected with another dengue virus	Diabetes mellitus
Pregnant women	Chronic renal failure
Infants	Obesity
Elderly	Sickle cell anemia

Laboratory testing

Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR) can be used to detect viral RNA in serum samples collected during the first 5 days post symptom onset. Testing for DENV specific IgM antibodies should be requested for serum specimens taken ≥ 6 days after onset. XXX CHD can provide guidance on how and when to submit samples to the Department of Health (DOH) Bureau of Laboratories.

Resources:

XXX County Health Department phone number: XXXXXX

FL DOH: <http://myfloridaeh.com/medicine/arboviral/index.html>

CDC: <http://www.cdc.gov/dengue/clinicallab/clinical.html>