

Public Health Points

York City Bureau of Health

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Chikungunya Virus Infection

The York City Bureau of Health announces its first reported case of chikungunya virus infection in a City resident who recently returned from travel in the Dominican Republic. Chikungunya virus is transmitted to humans by infected mosquitoes.

Although this infection is new to us here in York, between December 2013 and March 2015, more than 1.2 million cases of chikungunya have been reported in 44 countries and territories throughout the Americas. Local transmission has been reported from almost every island in the Caribbean, all countries in Central America, several countries in South America, and parts of Mexico.

In 2014, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), nearly 2,500 cases of chikungunya were reported in the United States. Almost all were in returning travelers, with the exception of 11 locally transmitted cases in South Florida.

CDC states there is no way to predict how long the outbreak in the Americas will last. Transmission may continue for years, with increases during the rainy season, from May through December. Chikungunya could even become an endemic disease in tropical areas of the Western Hemisphere. Because of the temperate climate in most of the continental United States, sustained transmission is unlikely beyond South Florida and along the US-Mexico border.

Signs and symptoms of chikungunya infection appear, on average, within 3 to 7 days after exposure and usually include high fever and severe joint pains and inflammation, less frequently a rash and low lymphocyte (a type of white blood cell) count. A history of travel to countries with a tropical climate almost always goes along with the signs and symptoms. Recovery typically takes 7 to 10 days. Supportive care and pain control are the usual treatments.

Certain individuals are at higher risk for more serious disease, including people with serious underlying medical conditions and people aged 65 or older. Pregnant women infected late in pregnancy are at risk of passing the virus to the newborn baby. People with arthritis appear to be at greater risk of developing persistent joint pains.

Healthcare providers should report suspected chikungunya cases to their local or state health department to facilitate diagnosis and mitigate the risk for local transmission.

Travelers going to popular tourist and cruise destinations in the Caribbean and other areas where chikungunya is a risk may not seek a pre-travel consultation or volunteer their travel plans. Healthcare providers should use primary care visits as an opportunity to ask about upcoming travel, particularly for those patient who are known to be frequent travelers. Anyone planning to travel to a tropical destination at any time of the year should be counseled on the need to avoid mosquito bites.

General protective measures include:

- Using an approved insect repellent when outside;
- Wearing long-sleeved shirts and long pants and socks as much as possible; and
- Staying in accommodations that are air-conditioned or well screened.

The *Aedes* mosquitoes that transmit chikungunya are aggressive daytime biters. Until a vaccine or antiviral therapies are available to offer to travelers, the best advice to help avoid mosquito-borne diseases such as chikungunya is to avoid getting bitten. For the most up-to-date information about chikungunya, see CDC's chikungunya website at:

www.cdc.gov/chikungunya.

Reportable Conditions 2015 York, PA		
Reported Cases	April 2015	Cum.
Animal Bites	12	35
Campylobacter Enteritis	0	3
Chikungunya Virus Infection	1	1
Chlamydia	36	162
Enterohemorrhagic E. Coli Diarrhea	1	1
Giardiasis	0	1
Gonorrhea	6	31
Hepatitis B	1	2
Hepatitis C	8	21
HIV Infection	0	6
Influenza Type A	0	45
Influenza Type B	11	16
Influenza, Not Specified	0	1
Lyme Disease	1	2
Meningitis – Bacterial	0	1
Pertussis	1	3
Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV) Infection	7	36
Syphilis – Primary/Secondary	0	1
Tuberculosis – Latent	1	12
Total Case Reports	86	380

June is National Safety Month – “What I Live For”

NATIONAL
SAFETY
MONTH 2015

Each June, the National Safety Council encourages organizations and the public to get involved and participate in National Safety Month. NSM is an annual observation to educate and influence behaviors around leading causes of preventable injuries and deaths.

The 2015 NSM theme is “What I Live For”. Everyone has something they live to see or experience. No matter what your passion is, we should engage in safe behaviors so we can live for what matter to us. The important topics this year will include prescription painkiller abuse, transportation safety, ergonomics (designing and arranging things so that people can use them easily and safely at home and at work), emergency preparedness, and slips, trips and falls.

For further information about National Safety Month, check out the National Safety Council website at www.nsc.org.



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