

9 Dengue fever

Transmission

- Mosquito bite
- Dengue fever mosquitoes usually bite during the daytime

Symptoms

- Starts with sudden fever that lasts 3 to 5 days
- Can be accompanied by severe headache, muscle and joint pain, pain behind the eyes, and a rash
- In some very severe cases, can cause bleeding (known as “dengue haemorrhagic fever”)

Prevention

- ➔ Prevention of mosquito bites
- ➔ Vector control and use of insect screens on windows
- ➔ Spraying of houses to kill mosquitoes

- ➔ Destruction of mosquito breeding sites
- ➔ Wearing clothes during the daytime that prevent mosquito bites, such as long-sleeved shirts, etc.

Vulnerable people

- Children under 5 years and pregnant women are more vulnerable

In case of epidemic

- ➔ Vector control
- ➔ Destruction of mosquito breeding sites
- ➔ Sometimes spraying of houses to kill the larvae of mosquitoes

- ➔ Detection and referral of new and suspected cases to health facilities
- ➔ Health promotion
- ➔ Community mobilization

Volunteer actions

See the following **action tools** for more information on what actions to take against dengue fever:

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Community-based assessment questions

Make a map of the community and mark the information you gather on the map.

- When did the epidemic start?
- How many people live in the affected community?
- How many children under 5 years of age live in the affected community?
- Do people usually use insecticide-treated bed nets? Who in the family uses them?
- Who and where are the vulnerable people?
- How many people have died from dengue fever and where?
- How many people have fallen sick with dengue fever and where?
- Are there any health services and where?
- Are there any bed net distributions?
- Is there a health education promotion in place?
- Is there a spraying programme going on in your area? Can you help with it?

Actions

- Make sure as many people as possible have bed nets.