

# CHIKUNGUNYA

Chikungunya is a viral disease transmitted to humans by infected *Aedes aegypti* mosquitoes.



First identified during an outbreak in Tanzania in 1952, chikungunya is a virus that is transmitted between humans by the *Aedes aegypti* mosquito.

The word chikungunya comes from the African Kimakonde language; it means 'to become contorted', as the disease causes debilitating joint pain that induces a stooped appearance.

Between 2014 and 2017, there was a large outbreak across the Americas, with more than 2,5 million suspected cases of chikungunya recorded in the Caribbean islands, Latin America and the United States. More than 600 deaths were attributed to this disease during this period.

## Causes

Chikungunya is caused by a virus transmitted primarily by *Aedes aegypti* mosquitoes. These mosquitoes bite during the day, usually just after sunrise and around sunset.

## Symptoms



**HEADACHE**



**RASH**



**FATIGUE**



**SUDDEN FEVER**



**MUSCLE AND JOINT ACHES**

Chikungunya causes severe fever and debilitating joint pain, and shares some clinical signs with Zika and dengue. This can lead to misdiagnosis in areas where these diseases are prevalent. Symptoms usually improve within a week; however, occasionally the joint pain may last for months or even years.

## More about chikungunya

Chikungunya is a mosquito-borne disease caused by the chikungunya virus. Here are answers to some frequently asked questions about this disease and its symptoms, treatments and prevention techniques.

### Where does chikungunya occur?

Chikungunya is most prevalent in Asia, Africa, the Americas and the Pacific. It also occurs in warmer parts of Europe.

Chikungunya cases have been reported from more than 100 countries.

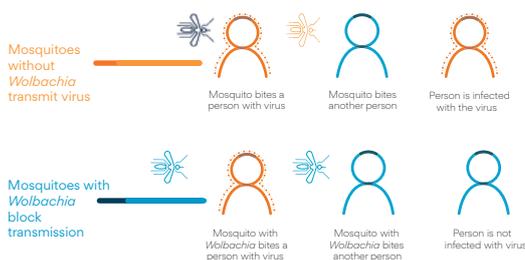
### How many people have been affected by chikungunya?

Chikungunya occurs in sporadic outbreaks that are often separated by periods of more than 10 years. Using personal repellents and wearing protective clothing can help to prevent mosquito bites.

Between 53,000 and 330,000 cases are estimated to occur on average each year worldwide, but the 2014 epidemic in the Americas saw more than 1 million chikungunya cases reported in a single year.

### How does chikungunya spread?

Chikungunya spreads wherever *Aedes aegypti* mosquitoes are present. It is a virus transmitted between humans primarily by this mosquito, which is commonly found around homes and urban areas.



### How is chikungunya treated?

There is no specific antiviral drug treatment for chikungunya. Treatment primarily focuses on relieving symptoms with common medications.

### How can we help prevent chikungunya?

Conventional strategies for chikungunya control rely heavily on reducing the number of water-holding containers that support mosquito breeding, and using insecticides to suppress the mosquito population. However, it is challenging to achieve sustained reductions in mosquito numbers, and dengue outbreaks can still occur.

Using personal repellents and wearing protective clothing can help to prevent mosquito bites.

In contrast, the World Mosquito Program's *Wolbachia* method doesn't aim to reduce the mosquito population, rather to replace it with *Wolbachia*-carrying mosquitoes. *Wolbachia* helps to block the transmission of chikungunya, as well as other viruses transmitted by *Aedes aegypti* mosquitoes, such as Zika, dengue and yellow fever.

### How can I find out more about chikungunya?

Contact your local health authority for guidance. Or, for general information, read this chikungunya fact sheet from the World Health Organization.

[READ THE CHIKUNGUNYA FACT SHEET FROM THE WHO](#)

## About us

The World Mosquito Program (WMP) is a not-for-profit group of companies owned by Monash University that works to protect the global community from mosquito-borne diseases. The World Mosquito Program uses naturally occurring bacteria called *Wolbachia* to reduce the ability of mosquitoes to transmit viruses to humans.

Following decades of research and successful field trial results, the World Mosquito Program is currently partnering with communities in 11 countries around the world to implement our

ground-breaking solution. We have staff working in countries across Oceania, Asia, Europe, and the Americas, and offices established in Australia, Vietnam, France and Panama.

Our approach has widespread support from communities, governments, research institutes and philanthropic partners around the world. Through collaboration and innovation, we are making a difference to millions of lives.

#### Contact us



A collaboration between:

